

PEEL WEEKLY NEWS

Dec. 24, 2020

MISSISSAUGA | BRAMPTON | CALEDON



Merry Christmas and Happy Holidays!

Pixabay

It has been a strange - and at times, turbulent - year, but we can all look forward to new beginnings. With Christmas and New Year's right around the corner, the staff at Peel Weekly News wish you all the best this holiday season, and a Happy New Year for 2021.

Look for new announcements in the coming year, including additional giveaways, the re-launch of our website, business-to-business initiatives and more!

We thank you for your continuing support, and urge to you to stay safe with your loved ones.

From the staff and contributors at Peel Weekly News - here's to a greater new year!

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MISSISSAUGA | BRAMPTON | CALEDON

Dec. 24, 2020

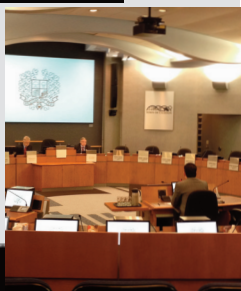
Charity feels the holiday blues after thieves rob development

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Motion to rebalance representation in Peel a go

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Brissett a no-go for Raptors as team changes tactics

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Insurance provider gives back to local club

► LIFESTYLE Pg 28



Support for workers through 'Trees of Hope'

► LIFESTYLE Pg 32



by Clover Sterling
and Alex Gregory

"V Day" Recognized as Peel Heads Back Into Lockdown

Tullamore Care Community personal support worker Vilma Whyte became Brampton's first recipient of the Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine, during an event held at Brampton Civic Hospital on Dec. 22, 2020. Hospital officials and city officials made it clear that the situation continues to be tenuous across the city's health system. (WOHS)

The COVID-19 vaccine has finally made their way to the first front-line workers in Peel Region -- but residents remain out of luck this holiday season, as a renewed lockdown will keep the region frosted over until the end of January.

Peel, and the rest of the province, heads into its second extended lockdown beginning on Boxing Day, due to a rapid surge in cases and fears from multiple levels of government that a new COVID-19 strain originating in the U.K. could make its way to Canada.

Non-essential businesses will remain closed through at least Jan. 23 in all southern regions of the province, with indoor public events and social gatherings being prohibited under current municipal and provincial by-laws.

The provincial-level lockdown will work similarly to the March lockdown, but essential businesses are allowed to remain open. Facing a wave of criticism over rising cases, Premier Doug Ford said the move was necessary in the coming weeks to save lives and re-

duce the number of people visiting their hospitals.

"If we get tired of taking action now, the consequences can be devastating," Ford said Monday about the lockdown. The decision to shut down the province on Dec. 26 appeared to be a step back from the original plan to close the province on Dec. 24, based on reports from sources within Ford's cabinet.

"The reality is that this strictness will not go away until more Ontarians are vaccinated."

Continued Pg 15

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Our Membership Program builds on several initiatives launched within the past year, including a limited print run distributed through Mississauga and Brampton, a revamped website launching this month and future initiatives to grow and expand Peel Weekly News through the Region - and beyond! Your investment will help us support local advertisers — who will support you in turn!

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**Special Christmas
Giveaway
Details on Pg 4!**

Local charity feels the holiday blues after thieves rob development

by Alex Gregory

Just over a year after several thousand dollars worth of donated tools were stolen from donation and salvage trucks, a Mississauga-based charity has been impacted by a holiday heist.

Habitat for Humanity Halton-

Mississauga (HFHHM), a non-profit charity that builds affordable housing for qualified homeowners, announced Monday that it had once again been robbed by thieves who stole thousands of dollars in tools from a Mis-

sisauga construction site.

According to HFHHM staff, the thieves targeted a housing project in the Bristow-Law area, and accessed the site through a locked window before stealing the tools being used for the project.

Last November, the charity suffered from the loss of tools and supplies robbed from their Burlington location, which were donated by the community and being used at a project site.

"Like all charities, we rely heavily

on the donations of others, so to have these tools stolen one year later is devastating," HFHHM spokesperson Julie Watt said Wednesday in an interview with Peel Weekly News.

The combined value of the equipment stolen was \$4,500, and the organization is attempting to recoup the cost from community donations, said Watt.

"To target us a year later and steal the very tools we replaced the year before is truly devastating," said Watt, who explained that HFHHM has also dealt with the ongoing challenges faced by the provincial shut-downs, including their "ReStore" lo-

cations, which resell gently-used items back to the community and raise revenue needed to build affordable housing.

The Bristow-Law project was planned to house eight qualified families upon its completion.

HFHHM, which was founded in 1999, has helmed multiple housing projects throughout Peel Region and nearby Halton Region.

Support from the community is being accepted, and anyone who can donate new or gently-used tools to offset the losses is asked to do so by visiting the HFHHM website (habitat-hm.ca/way-s-to-give/donate).



Suspect nabbed after violent jewellery store robbery

A 30 year-old Toronto man is under arrest in connection with a brazen robbery and shooting that took place last month in Mississauga.

Peel Police revealed that an investigation began in connection with a robbery that occurred on Nov. 9 in the city's north end, in the Airport and Derry Road area.

Around 2 p.m. on the day of the incident, multiple suspects entered a jewellery store and forcibly confined several customers and an employee at gunpoint.

The suspects stole \$1.5 million in jewellery and gold before zip-tying the confined

customers and fleeing.

An employee followed the suspects to the parking lot outside the store and attempted to recover a bag with some of the stolen jewellery, but he was shot at close range twice by the armed suspect before the robbers fled in a white BMW X4 SUV.

The employee sustained serious wounds, but recovered from his injuries.

Police later identified one of the suspects as 30 year-old Olakunle Banjoko, of Toronto.

Banjoko was arrested and charged with multiple offences, including attempted murder and robbery with a

firearm, on Dec. 21 after police conducted a search warrant on a property in Toronto.

Banjoko appeared in Brampton court to answer to the charges on Dec. 22.

A second suspect, who was wearing a black top with a white-collar, black pants, black dress shoes, black gloves, and a realistic mask that appeared as a white male with a long black beard, is still being sought by police.

Anyone with video footage or other information regarding the case is asked to call the Central Robbery Bureau at (905) 453-2121, ext. 3410.

Brampton employees hacked in cyber breach

An as-yet unrevealed number of City of Brampton employees had their personal information exposed in a cybersecurity breach, the city announced late Wednesday.

City spokespersons announced that they became aware of a data breach recently caused by "former employees of the corporation," while they were employed, that caused a leak of information regarding current and former employees.

The city notified credit monitoring services, along with the affected employees and the Office of the Information and Privacy Commissioner of Ontario, regarding the matter, and has passed on information to Peel Police to launch an investigation.

The number of employees affected by the breach was not revealed by the city, which said it has no plans to comment further on the matter.

"The City of Brampton takes the privacy and personal information of its employees seriously," a spokesperson said in a statement to Peel Weekly News Wednesday evening.



STAY IN TOUCH

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PEEL
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Letter To The Editor

Letters submitted to Peel Weekly News may be edited for grammar and clarity.

RE: appointment of Hassaan Basit to Chair of Conservation Authority Working Group

A recent decision regarding the head of the province's Conservation Authority Working Group will affect CVCA and TRCA and all the Conservation Authorities in Ontario.

The Chair of Halton Conservation, Hassaan Basit, was named appointed Chair of the Ontario Conservation Authority working group.

Hassaan Basit certainly has the academia, the experience, and the support from Conservation Halton to back his appointment, and he may well be an outspoken advocate for conservation authorities, although I

have not seen anything from him personally on the topic.

The big question remains, does he have the political will to go head-to-head with the Doug Ford PC Government?

Will he put the people of Ontario ahead of PC Party politics? His education and credentials are extensive and impressive and Basit appears to be well grounded and reliant on scientific-based information and evidence in his decision making. His organizational skills are also extraordinary.

I guess time will tell if he won't compromise what appears to be his commitment and values towards the environment, conservation, and the preservation of our natural environment, especially as it relates to our precious water resources over those of Doug Ford's PC

Party.

I am concerned Mr. Basit tends to take the position of the 'entertainment factor' as it relates to business and potential entrepreneurial endeavours who view our conservation resources from a far different perspective, that puts a successful business enterprise over those of basic common-sense conservation choices and decisions of what is the best use of our natural resources.

Basit's success is a result of him finding the balance between the corporate/political agenda and the public conservation protections essential to a healthy long lasting environment for future generations.

I have to wonder if he will ultimately go along with and agree to place emphasis on a PC Party-driven agenda that places priority on using our natural resources and the lands associ-

ated with protecting and preserving our natural environment as a rich untouched economic resource ripe for exploiting by the private sector.

It is common knowledge of Doug Ford's commitment to developers and his promise to grant easier access to property and resources previously denied them by the 36 Conservation Authorities.

Ford even created a Minister of Cutting Red Tape. Brampton South PC MPP Prabmeet Sarkaria, who has been working hard crafting the legislation and the behind the scenes 'dirty work' to accomplish this task.

It's too bad the Ford Government hasn't truly focused on protecting the good folks of Ontario from the ravages of COVID rather than protecting those with business interests in the privately owned Long Term Care fa-

cilities, private health care, and considering business concerns over those of our public health warnings.

Why doesn't Ford break the conservative mold and devise an aid and relief program for small business which have been negatively affected by the restrictions place on them by COVID?

But then that would go against the basic conservative doctrine of survival of the fittest and big government is bad and the corporate and private sector knows best when it comes to what is in the best interest of the public.

He wouldn't dare upset his political support base or the threat of losing political fund rising potential.

Therein lies the dilemma.

Peter Bailey
Brampton

Can COVID rules ensure the holidays don't end in tears?

by Surjit Singh Flora, Special Comment

This Christmas appears to be a time for reflection, not celebration.

Despite Canada's lockdown measures, the number of COVID-19 cases continues to rise, and challenges arise with the upcoming holiday season.

With the virus still wreaking havoc and not showing any signs of slowing down, we could have a bad Christmas. There will be no church gatherings, and some retail chains may not have enough goods in stock.

This is mainly because of virus-triggered shutdowns that upended supply chains.

Many workers will be on furlough this Christmas. Some of them would have also been asked to take a pay cut to keep their company afloat.

Being able to fork out money to enjoy the season would be a big ask for these people.

There's also no denying that thousands of people would be without their loved ones because the pandemic has claimed their lives. So rather than having a day of celebration, we would be having a day of reflection.

For some reason, the Christmas vibes seem less exciting this year, given what has happened

already and with the current measures in place.

Christmas can be easily placed on the backburner when safety and lifesaving measures are of the utmost importance. Christmas celebrations are - or were - one of the most social gatherings, where people could enjoy the staff and family get-togethers.

It is meant to be the most joyous of times, after all, when humanity blends together their religious faiths in the celebration of Jesus Christ on the day of his birth.

At this time of the year, such a state of mind is somewhat absent, dismantled,

or eviscerated by COVID-19.

It remains to be seen as to what 2021 will bring us, and whether the promise vaccine delivered by international drugmakers will provide the panacea to our current COVID crisis - or if a rumored mutated strain from the U.K. will set us back to square one in terms of a one-stop solution for the virus.

This year has become a thunderous silent call to repentance, rather than celebration.

Humanity's collective compassion seems in a state of attrition, too long in a depreciating spiral.

The world demands better from us - and we should demand better from ourselves.

Retailers are also dealing with their own challenges - the damages sustained by multiple lockdowns. With the rapid downturn suffered by the economy, people suddenly lost all means of income, hence losing the mood to celebrate.

During the Christmas season, Canadians become party animals; they often engage in merry making. This year, protect the ones you love, stay in if possible - and don't let this year end in tears.

Opinion

Can the launch of the COVID-19 vaccine save us?



**Surjit Singh
Flora**

Column

It's been nearly a year since the COVID-19 epidemic began.

During this time, it has persecuted everyone; rich and poor, white and black, young and old, without any discrimination.

The epidemic spread from village to village and city to city and country to country - it was even announced Tuesday that Antarctica had confirmed its first cases of the virus.

In this one year, every country has been affected by the COVID-19 epidemic in one form or another.

The disease has claimed millions of lives; pain, suffering, and struggle have become a part of life.

The launch of a vaccine in England, Canada and America has brought good news to the world.

In a way, it is a campaign to save the whole of humanity. It is a ray of hope for other countries that their numbers will come tomorrow, if not today, but a close watchdog has dashed that hope.

The People's Vaccine Alliance has expressed concerns that the COVID-19 vaccine may have been introduced recently, but rich countries are well on their way to capitalizing on and hoarding it, and the vaccine may only reach poorer countries such as South Africa at an undetermined point next year.

When that happens, only a handful of countries will be able to get the injection. The number of such emerging countries will be around 70, where people will have to bear the epidemic's brunt by the end of next year.

Surprisingly, the organization that has shared this information has teamed up with leading organizations such as Frontline AIDS, Global Justice Now, Amnesty International and Oxfam. Therefore, this claim cannot be ignored.

Some figures are staggering, as 96 per cent of Pfizer vaccines have already been shipped to the West, and are considered to be 95 per cent effective.

Only 14 of the world's wealthiest nations already own 53 per cent of these vaccines' total stock. Canada has accumu-

lated so much stock that it can give a dose of four injections to each of its citizens.

On the other hand, no matter how hard they try, developing countries will not be able to get both of these vaccines, which is one of the main reasons so much of the drug has reached the warehouses of rich countries.

Secondly, this medicine is costly.

Simultaneously, it will be challenging for poor countries to build a place with a temperature of 70 degrees to maintain this medicine's anti-dote ability.

AstraZeneca is preparing 50 million doses at the Serum Institute of India. Perhaps that is why many foreign diplomats, including Barry O'Farrell of Australia, have been forced to say that many countries are developing vaccines.

Still, only India can meet the world's needs. Along with their scientists, the credit goes to the Prime Minister who visited the institutes which are developing vaccines.

He has encouraged scientists in challenging times. There are also indications that India will soon launch the world's largest COVID-19

vaccine with mobile technology. It is just waiting for the consent of the Comptroller General of Drugs of India.

Once approved, 300 million people are expected to be vaccinated. The vaccine is expected to be lifesaving for critically ill individuals and COVID-19 patients in the first vaccination phase.

In this case, we are one step ahead of the United States, where President-elect Joe Biden has promised to vaccinate 100 million Americans in the first 100 days.

The United States has been hit hardest by the virus, with more than three million deaths since the onset.

Despite this, the United States is awaiting formal approval from the Food

and Drug Administration (FDA).

However, the FDA has approved the use of the Pfizer / Biotech vaccine in emergencies.

In Canada, Moderna has also received emergency approval for its vaccine, which is expected to ship within weeks.

India has also reportedly increased its doses from Indonesia and has struck deals with countries such as Turkey, Brazil and Chile. India has been at the center of the world's hopes amidst China's trade bargaining chips and other rich countries.

The World Health Organization (WHO) has called for equal distribution of the COVID-19 vaccine in 189 countries with its global vaccine called COVAX.

Therefore, vaccine companies should abandon their advantage and share the formula of the drug to save the lives of the people, so that the vaccines can be developed according to the world's needs.

At the same time, people should understand that the disease can only be eradicated by uniting and following their local health department's instructions.

People should understand that this deadly disease has brought the knees of rich countries to the brink; it can become a scourge in developing and densely populated countries.

Everyone indeed has to earn a living, but it must also be kept in mind that there is a world if there is life.



FEBRUARY 9, 2021

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Patrick Brown**
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Opinion

The Grinches Who Stole Christmas



Alex Gregory

Several months ago, I was asked by a good friend (and politician) what I thought about the way “Doug” had handled the COVID-19 pandemic at its onset.

I told him at the time that he was doing about as well as could be expected. Now, I’m not so sure.

Here we sit, on the cusp of another lockdown that will stretch into the new year. The outlook for small and medium-sized businesses in the GTA is bleak, with more and more closing by the day.

Premier Ford has taken to instigating a war of words with Prime Minister Justin Trudeau over the country’s borders and the lack of testing on inbound international travelers, referencing a supposed new strain of COVID-19 that is much more virulent.

A nice sentiment,

but the time to institute such testing was months ago, not during one of the busiest holiday periods of the year. It’s like trying to stop a dam that’s in the process of bursting with a wine cork.

You want a reason why case counts are exploding? Look no further than big-box stores, which are experiencing some of their highest loads of the year as hundreds cram in for last-minute shopping.

Photos, videos and personal anecdotes concerning people crammed in “mask to mask” litter social media, and it’s clear that any chance of trying to rein in such behaviour through local and provincial by-laws simply wasn’t going to work, nor was there any plan put into place to protect the fortunes of businesses that desperately needed the support and were on the cusp of closing. (Sorry, a pithy marketing campaign nine months after the fact won’t cut it.)

Frankly, there has been a lot of confusion, incompetence

and naivete at all levels of the system.

The province adjourned on Dec. 9 for a two-month break, just as case counts dramatically rose in hard-hit regions like Peel and Toronto - and they won’t be back until Feb. 16, instead spending the time firing off releases crowing about interim supports that are unlikely to get to the entrepreneurs and businesses that truly need it.

Of course, that didn’t stop certain MPPs (and some of our local municipal politicians) from participating in a flurry of press conferences and photo-ops boasting about holiday initiatives.

While I appreciate the sentiment as a member of the media, I’d rather see our elected officials doing more to support our local food banks and hardest-hit businesses than hosting an in-person Christmas parade and showing up at vaccination photo-ops.

Meanwhile, the feds, when they

weren’t busy trying to downplay the fears of 440,000 Canadians who had received “education letters” from the Canada Revenue Agency regarding unclear eligibility for the CERB program, were busy cobbling up support for potential 2022 candidates just before the holiday break.

It’s probably fair to say that 2020 was a rough year for Trudeau, between the WE Charity scandal, a proposed Clean Fuel Standard carbon tax that has the potential to wreak havoc on low- and middle-income families, and the ongoing uncertainty of the pandemic.

Interestingly, an Ipsos Reid poll commissioned by Global News earlier this week found that Trudeau’s chances to win a majority in the next federal election have remained flat, with 35 per cent support from participants versus 32 per cent for the Conservatives.

If an election were called today, I have a

feeling that there would be a significant shakeup in both the provincial and federal governments, though Trudeau would likely hang on only because the Conservatives haven’t mounted any credible opposition in the interim.

And what of our local leaders?

We’ve seen repeated promises and pledges from many of our municipal representatives and local leaders to go after COVID rule-breakers and those skirting by-laws, but let’s be honest here: few people are going to rat out their neighbours for hosting a private holiday get-together, in spite of the overwhelming warnings and direct requests from public health units to disregard in-person Christmas celebrations.

If you live in Caledon, you’re most definitely out in the cold this season. You just lost two seats in the game of regional representation musical chairs, and Brampton and Mississauga laughed at you while

doing it. A walk-on motion introduced at the end of a six-hour regional council meeting, rushed through the consultation process with barely any time for public comment and approval within a month, being hailed as “momentous” two days before Christmas.

You even had your own Benedict Arnold vote against the interest of her constituents, giving the other two municipalities greater power over Caledon’s planning decisions. Truly stunning and brave.

I think it’s fair to say in the court of public opinion, very few of our leaders actually “won” this year.

With a lockdown now stretching through the end of January in Peel, the effectiveness of widespread vaccinations months away and no clear end in sight for the pandemic, 2021 will be the real litmus test for whether our various levels of government will rise to the occasion or fall flat on their faces.

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The next regular edition of Peel Weekly News will be distributed on Jan. 6, 2021, featuring the news, business, sports and lifestyle content you know and expect!

Look forward to additional services, website updates and breaking news stories in the new year, and celebrate this holiday season safely with your loved ones!

The winners of the Dec. 16, 2020 Christmas giveaway have been selected, pending successful confirmation of their shipping address, and will be announced in the next edition of the paper.

Six prizes have been given away this Christmas, including three Nic & Syd watches, a Viewpoint by Timex rose-gold ladies' watch, a packaged basketball from Superfan Nav Bhatta and a dual activity tracker/watch from Everlast.

Stay tuned for more giveaways - and how you can promote your product or service in the pages of Peel Weekly News!

Special thanks to Let's Get Together for providing this month's giveaway prizes!

See you in 2021!

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City confirms positive COVID cases at fire stations

by Alex Gregory

11 positive cases of COVID-19 have been confirmed at Mississauga fire stations, along with an additional 36 staff who are self-isolating, the city confirmed Wednesday evening.

The city said in a statement that as a result of the positive cases, four fire stations have been impacted.

"I want to thank all our MFES firefighters and staff for the commitment, dedication and sacrifices they have shown and continue to demonstrate during this unprecedented pandemic," said Nancy Macdonald-Duncan, Acting Fire Chief. "Public safety is our top priority. With a team of more than 630 firefighters at 21 stations, we are

able to adjust our crews and ensure public safety is never compromised."

The City's fire stations are not open to the public and firefighters who respond to calls are in full personal protective equipment for their own protection and that of the public.

"Mississauga's world-class first responders, including our firefighters, fire staff and front-line health care workers, have been working around the clock to keep all of us healthy and safe," said Mayor Bonnie Crombie. "We continue to battle hard against this virus.... it's more important than ever to follow the advice of public health to ensure everyone's safety and to protect our first responders."

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A Christmas Worth Remembering



Peter Whitaker
Publisher

It has been more than a half-century since my last Christmas in Scotland.

Some 57 years ago, in 1963, my parents took me on a boat to Canada from their beloved Scotland to start new lives.

My family, including my sister, brother and I, were along for the ride... and what a ride it's been.

Settling in Toronto for about six years and then moving to Brampton, seeing my mom and dad buy their first house in 1969 in a new community named Bramalea and everything that's followed.

When I look at the years my parents worked hard and provided for us all, I am thankful and can honestly say the Canadian dream

worked for them. My sister, brother and I are the results of thier success.

Flash forward to a worldwide pandemic, and me starting me life over a year ago this week.

I'm a big boy, I appear to be mentally stable and I think I have a good head on my shoulders.

All that and two dollars will get you a coffee at Tim Horton's.

When 2020 started, we had no Coronavirus, and I had made plans to travel internationally this year.

Mexico and meeting a new love was way back in February, a quick visit to my parents in Florida and visiting my new love in Scotland took me through March... then all hell broke loose.

Lockdowns can-

celled flights, travel restrictions tightened, and I barely managed to get back to Canada at the end of March, going through my first of five quarantines this year. Yes, nothing was to stop me from travelling, not even a pandemic.

When I mentioned how mentally stable I was, I forgot to mention that I lost whatever common sense I possessed.

How smart was it to travel through this? My last flight of the year was on Dec. 6, back to Scotland to be with my new love for Christmas and New Year.

As for travelling, I've had to wear masks at every airport and on every flight. I get a temperature check at every airport and was tested twice for the virus, and so far, it's worked out well for me.

Now I'm in the U.K., and both here and back in Ontario, we are going

under the most severe lockdown since we started.

We even have reports of a new strain of the virus here that has the world on edge.

I have no control of any future either here or back home, so the decision was an easy one.

Live your life today, because no one knows what tomorrow will bring, I could have walked out my door in Port Credit and been given the virus by anyone, got sick and would probal- bly have gone through hell given my personal health situation, but I choose to live my life and will have no regrets.

Merry Christmas and Happy Holidays to all our readers - we hope that 2021 is a more optimistic and positive year for you and your loved ones.

Peel Weekly News thanks your for your contiuing support.

Province ups imaging group with \$332k in PPE funding

The province will provide \$332,000 in funding to a Mississauga imaging company to produce personal protective equipment (PPE).

Officials revealed last week that the province would provide the funding to McRae Imaging to produce made-in-Mississauga masks that a unique lip-reading lends, which will make it easier for residents wearing masks to understand each other, as well as aid the deaf and hard of hearing.

The funding, provided through the Ontario Together Fund, follows a part-

nership announced earlier this summer with the Como Foundation, which produced the "My Access" Mask. More than 1.4 million masks will be produced through the new endeavour.

"Creating the My Access Mask was the change towards breaking down communications barriers. The funding and our partnerships have allowed us to bring awareness and solutions to every community in the province with our My Access Mask," said Sarah Veinot of the Como Foundation.



Holiday Package

Group Accountability Program



Monthly Group Q&A Call



Weekly Commitment Check-Ins via Email



Maximum 5 People per Program

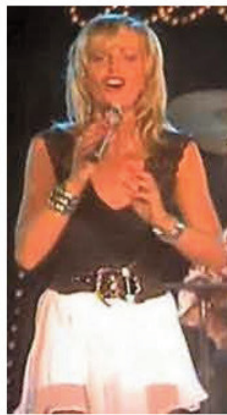


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PEEL WEEKLY NEWS

SMOOTH

RADIO



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Participants cause damage at protest against police violence

For the second week in a row, more than a dozen protestors turned out to speak out against police brutality this past weekend, causing property damage at a Peel Police facility in the process.

A 24 year-old female protestor was arrested and charged with mischief over \$5,000 during the

protest, which took place on Dec. 19 and saw participants splatter fake blood across a walkway and on a statue outside Peel Police's central headquarters in south Brampton.

The protestors, who identify themselves as the "Malton People's Movement (MPM)" spoke out against instances of alleged bru-

tality against Black residents, including D'Andre Campbell, a Brampton resident who was shot and killed by an officer in April after calling police to attend the home regarding a domestic dispute.

On Dec. 14, the province's Special Investigations Unit (SIU) issued a statement indicating that

they believed there was "no basis" to lay criminal charges against the officer involved in Campbell's death, though it cites issues with the way the situation was handled, including no attempts made to verbally calm down Campbell, who had schizophrenia, at the time of the incident.

"Peel Regional Police needs to identify, charge and fire killer cops on their force instead of going after protestors fighting for justice," the group said in a statement Monday. "Know your rights, have each other's back and keep resisting with us and the families."

The protest follows a similar demonstration held earlier this month at 11 Division in Mississauga, where protestors caused damage to the grounds around the facility.

The Malton People's Movement has also been tied to a series of

incidents in which "disruptive" actions were taken against the community.

A series of videos posted earlier this month by the Westwood Abbey Tenants' Association shows participants of the MPM acting in a threatening manner towards tenants, including blocking elevator doors, following them to their units and threatening physical violence before by-law officers interceded.

Peel Police said in a statement Monday that the protestors were "verbally abusive" towards officers attempting to speak with them, and that the protest turned "confrontational and aggressive," highlighting the paint thrown at the Peel Police monument.

"This monument, similar to others across our country, memorializes those who have paid the ultimate sacrifice and

have been killed on duty," the force said Saturday.

Others sympathized with the group's actions, saying the incident was part of a trend of police violence against innocent individuals and that the police have escalated the situation.

"A community is protesting in grief, and are being met with escalation by Peel Police," said artist and writer Daniel Rotsztein in a social media post. "Protesters are justifiably angry, but the Police have the money/guns: surely there are other ways to address this."

The police's violent response seems to be their only tool, and it is shameful."

The female protestor arrested at Saturday's demonstration will appear in Brampton court on Feb. 21, 2021 to answer to the charges.



The Compass

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Peel remains in lockdown through holidays

Continued from Pg 2

"I support Premier Ford's decision on a province-wide shutdown," Mississauga Mayor Bonnie Crombie echoed after the announcement Monday. "While I and many others in Mississauga were hoping that we would be moved out of lockdown by the New Year, this is regrettably not the case."

"The reality is that while COVID-19 case numbers in Peel are beginning to plateau, the situation at our hospitals remains dire, with elective surgeries being cancelled and patients being transferred to neighbouring regions to make room for a surge in COVID patients," Crombie said.

The lockdown came as the first doses of the Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine were administered to health care workers in Brampton and Mississauga.

At Brampton Civic Hospital, Tullamore Care Community personal support worker Vilma Whyte became the city's first recipient of the vaccine, while hospital officials and city

officials made it clear that the situation continues to be tenuous across Brampton's health system.

"It's a great relief today that 'V-Day' has arrived in Brampton," said Brampton Mayor Patrick Brown Tuesday, during a media event hosted at the hospital. "We've been hit really hard by this pandemic. We have so many essential workers on the front line... this was desperately needed."

The hospital system, which includes Brampton Civic, Etobicoke General Hospital and Peel Memorial Centre, currently has 27 confirmed COVID-19 cases in its ICU, and is still maintaining the ability to add capacity due to transferring patients to neighbouring regions in the GTA.

"We're working as a system," said Osler's chief operations officer, Kiki Ferrari, who called the situation "extraordinary" and credited the hard work of hospital staff and donations from the community for helping ease the stress on the system.

Peel logged an additional 448 confirmed cases Wednesday, and it is expected that a post-Christmas bump will drive case counts higher. In a press conference held after Tuesday's event, Ferrari said that Osler has planned for a post-holiday surge and will be taking appropriate measures.

Publicly funded elementary and secondary schools will also be closed until at least Jan. 11, with learning transferring to online models.

Elementary schools in southern Ontario will also be able to start in-person learning from Jan. 11, while secondary school students in Southern Ontario will not be allowed to return to classes until Jan. 25.

Peel's medical officer of health, Dr. Lawrence Loh, urged residents Tuesday to only celebrate Christmas with the individuals in their household, and refrain from taking non-essential trips.

"Every interaction presents a risk of transmission of COVID-19," said Loh.

MBOT: Survive to thrive in 2021

by Catherine Sople

On Dec. 9, Mississauga Board of Trade (MBOT) held its Annual General Meeting, themed for recovery out of COVID-19 lockdown by using webinar technology.

In 2021, MBOT will herald its 60th Anniversary. Originally called the Clarkson-Lorne Park Chamber of Commerce, MBOT's original Charter from the Canadian Chamber of Commerce is documented as July 11, 1961.

Back then, the polio pandemic was just coming under control after public health widely made available Canada's Salk vaccine since 1955.

Then, as now, MBOT President David Wojcik described to attendees of the AGM what business needs to thrive.

"We need to assess COVID-19 threats to recovery," said Wojcik. "At MBOT, together, we advocate for changes in government policy, so that business members can gain access to capital, talent and markets."

The AGM keynote on MBOT's Mississauga Economic Recovery Group initiative – MERG – was delivered by former MBOT Chair and current Director, Ellen McGregor, CEO of Fielding Environmental.

"A conversation in April, under COVID-19 lockdown, led to MBOT's launch of MERG six months later in October," she said.

MERG (pronounced Merge) is a first-of-its-kind co-created team which consists of six sector leaders intent to help Mississauga recover from the

economic downturn caused by COVID-19. Leaders from six key Mississauga sectors are helping to drive recovery efforts.

"As needs are uncovered, sectors will expand," says McGregor.

The MERG collaboration is driven by data, to support recommendations from MBOT for actions, advocacy and communication. Bi-weekly meetings with Mississauga economic development office build local momentum to prime the pipeline to higher orders of government.

Insofar as a talent pipeline is concerned, Mississauga economic development has unique relationships with post-secondary education at University of Toronto at Mississauga and Sheridan College.

MBOT members were advised that a memorandum of understanding has been undertaken with the Council of Canadian Innovators, to encourage alignment in future forward competitive advantage in digital platforms, using on technology.

Barriers to MBOT membership have been removed with a "no fee" for travel and hospitality sectors hardest hit by COVID-19, to encourage participation and shared dialogue.

"Pivot and preparation for the next economy relies on collaboration," says McGregor. "As needs are uncovered, industry sectors at MERG will expand."

Contact merg@mbot.com for further information.

Do you think COVID-19 will affect the way we celebrate Christmas?

by Surjit Singh Flora

Ontario will enter a strict province-wide lockdown on Dec. 26, forcing almost all non-essential businesses to close.

The government announced that the lockdown will last until Jan. 23, and will apply to all areas in southern Ontario. Before Jan. 9, medical institutions not in southern Ontario will remain locked down.

When we spoke to local resident Jassi Viridi, she said that, "People weren't listening on Thanksgiving, and these

get-togethers started a massive leap in Ontario... they won't listen, and they won't have them for Christmas; it won't change anything." She said she expects the next two months to be "terrifying."

This is the first Christmas season in a long time to have restrictions.

For the second time, the governments are cautioning people against traveling to other homes, and that adhering to such warnings will help all residents avoid greater risk of

infection this year.

The festive period in urban areas, as things stand, normally has many activities happening at this time of the year. Our festival celebrations are a time to mingle and catch up with our extended families in rural areas, where real feasting and merry-making occur.

Our new normal does not allow us to indulge in such behaviour at this time.

We have to spend Christmas with our immediate families and avoid small gatherings

to keep ourselves and others safe.

Travelling to some destinations also comes with its own restrictions, thus making us reconsider our Christmas plans to reduce the spread of COVID-19. The reason for all this is so that we can keep our families, friends and communities safe.

When we spoke to Balbir Viridi, a Brampton resident, he said that, "Christmas is not a day on the calendar. This is not shopping, party-

ing or eating. Christmas is something in your heart. COVID-19 cannot take Christmas away from anyone who really knows what it means."

My small family is scattered all over the GTA and nationally, so we can't get together like every other Christmas. It is best not to risk ourselves; we can always get together when it's safe to do so.

With or without COVID-19, life must go on, and our Christmas celebrations will not be af-

fected. However, during this festive season, as much I would like to be together with people I love, I would not want to put them or myself at risk.

Covid-19 has only changed the way I will celebrate without affecting the celebrations themselves. I will follow the COVID-19 pandemic guidelines and celebrate with my household.

The most important thing to do is to keep social distance and avoid huge crowds.

Region approves motion to rebalance representation in Brampton, Caledon

As a year of uncertainty and change ends, Peel stands on the edge of remolding its regional representation, setting the stage for the coming year.

Representatives at Peel Regional Council approved a by-law last week at their regular meeting that would see Brampton pick up two more seats on regional council, while Caledon would see its regional representation reduced by two seats.

The new regional structure, which was approved by a vote of 19-1 at the Dec. 17 Regional Council meeting, was further ratified by Mississauga council Wednesday during their last regular meeting of the year. The new structure is only awaiting ratification by Brampton council, which would give it the majority of votes needed across all three councils to pass fully.

The approved representation, which would see Brampton's seats sit at nine, Mississauga's at 12 and Caledon's at three seats, come into effect beginning the 2022-26 council term.

"This is a step in the right direction to achieve a more balanced approach based on population," Mayor Bonnie Crombie said after the vote was ratified Wednesday, referring to past attempts to rebalance regional representation. "We have reviewed many scenarios and reallocating seats was the only way to achieve greater fairness."

Caledon currently has a population of approximately 66,000, versus just over 600,000 in Brampton and 828,000 in Mississauga. At Regional Council, Caledon represents 15,660 residents for each regional seat, compared to 65,742 residents per

regional seat in Mississauga, and 97,371 residents per regional seat in Brampton.

The motion to rebalance the region's representation was brought forward as a walk-on motion at the end of the Nov. 26 Regional Council meeting by Brampton Mayor Patrick Brown, and further amended by Mississauga Councillor Carolyn Parrish regarding its proposed wording. The walk-on motion caused a stir from several councillors, with some indicating that there was no public notice made before the motion was introduced, while others said the rebalancing was inevitable.

The introduction of the motion prompted public consultation, with members of Caledon and the surrounding municipalities making their views known on the motion, with several indicating that the decision didn't factor in the Town's future growth over the coming years.

"With the growth that is expected in Caledon over the next 20 years, Caledon, and in particular, Bolton will need an increase in councillors at the Region, not fewer. How does a drop in number of councillors for Caledon as proposed, help Caledon?" said local resident Joe Grogan, who submitted written comments to the consultation and criticized the Region for making the decision during a pandemic that has

made in-person comments difficult. "The majority of Caledon residents are not even aware of this matter. Where does the fault for that lie?"

Caledon Mayor Allan Thompson told Peel Weekly News earlier this month made similar comments, indicating that creating a motion to rebalance the region in the middle of a protest was "outrageous."

"All governments, whether they are the municipalities that make up Peel Region, or the Government of Ontario, should recognize the need to make sure people have legitimate opportunities to voice concerns," said Thompson, indicating that the move would cut the Town's democratic representation "by 40 per cent at a time like this."

"We don't want Caledon to go down to one seat. That would be unfair, but based on representation by population, that's what it would be," Mayor Patrick Brown said at the Nov. 26 meeting.

Thompson says that he and the Town agree that Brampton should be better represented, "but absolutely not at Caledon's expense and not in haste... our constituents deserve better than to be side-swiped by this resolution. That's why we have asked the province to put this on hold until our community can have a proper discussion that is not clouded by a global pandemic."



City nets \$20 million in

"restart" funding from province

Mississauga will receive more than \$20 million from the province to shore up expenses incurred through the COVID-19 pandemic, the city announced last week.

The city will receive \$20.968 million as part of the second round of the Safe Restart Agreement, which has shored the gap for local municipalities dealing with ongoing pressures related to the pandemic to offset their deficit and provide funding to address intended 2021 deficiencies.

"Cities like Mississauga have been on the frontlines of the crisis and we know that we will continue to face financial pressures over the next few years," said Mississauga Mayor Bonnie Crombie. "This funding goes a long way in allowing us to maintain the services that our residents expect."

"COVID-19 has shown that the role of local government has never been more important," said Paul Mitcham, City Manager and Chief Administrative Officer. "We still face challenges and difficult decisions will need to be made

but as we implement our recovery, this funding will help us continue to provide the essential services residents and businesses need."

Additional funding is anticipated for the Phase 2 transit portion of the Safe Restart Agreement.

"We continue to work on our 2021 Budget to manage the deficit from the pandemic while providing services and programs," said Gary Kent, Commissioner of Corporate Services and Chief Financial Officer. "Additional funding allocated through the Safe Restart Agreement will ensure that the City's 2020 operating deficit is tackled and provides additional relief for the 2021 fiscal year. We will continue to seek partnerships and advocate for long-term sustainable funding as we must also move forward with investments in transportation, fire and road safety, climate change and infrastructure."

To date, the city has received \$67.1 million through the provincial program.



Headwaters arts

Lockdowns resume in Ontario on Boxing Day

by Surjit Singh Flora

Ontarians will be back in lockdown as of Saturday, Dec. 26, the province announced late last week, walking back an apparent plan to shut down the province on Christmas Eve.

During this time all non-essential businesses will be closed.

The lockdown will begin at 12:01 p.m. on Dec. 26, and will continue through Jan. 23 in all regions of Southern Ontario.

The provincial-level lockdown will work functionally similar to the March lockdown, but essential businesses are allowed to remain open.

No indoor public events or social gatherings will be allowed during the lockdown.

Facing a wave of criticism over rising cases, Premier Doug Ford said the move was necessary in the coming weeks to save lives and reduce the number of people visiting their hospitals.

He said thousands of lives were at stake at the moment. "If we get

tired of taking action now, the consequences can be devastating."

He said the reality is that this strictness will not go away until more Ontarians are vaccinated.

Publicly funded elementary and secondary schools will also be closed until at least Jan. 11, with learning transferring to online models.

Elementary schools in southern Ontario will also be able to start in-person learning from Jan. 11, while secondary school students in Southern Ontario will not be allowed to return to classes until Jan. 25.

Travelers coming back to Canada will be asked to isolate themselves when returning to Ontario, with Ford pushing for mandatory testing on all international flights.

Toronto, Peel and York Region, as well as Windsor Essex, are already in lockdown. Hamilton was sent to the "gray" lockdown level on Monday.

Ford demands mandatory inspections at airports

Premier Doug Ford has lashed out at the federal government this past weekend, saying the sampling of international travelers to Canada through airports like Pearson International is being slowed down, and a new variant of the COVID-19 could leave the country vulnerable.

Late Sunday, the federal government announced that it was banning all flights from the United Kingdom for the next 72 hours.

Initial reports indicate that the new variants of COVID-19 are spreading faster than other strains but have not been reported in Canada yet.

Health Canada says it cannot say at this time

whether it has any serious symptoms, antibody response or vaccine effectiveness.

Many European countries have also announced that they are closing their borders with the U.K. over Christmas, with many even banning travel from the country.

Opposition groups called for a boycott of the federal government, but said that the 72-hour deadline was too short because he was not convinced that evidence could be gathered in such a short time.

Ford said he believes many people need to be quarantined, and that while many are respecting provincial rules outlining isolation, other travellers are not.



Mississauga nurse first in Peel to get COVID vaccine

A registered nurse at a Mississauga long-term care home has become the first woman to receive the COVID-19 vaccine in Peel Region.

Bella Rego, a registered nurse at Camilla Care Community Long Term Care Home, was given the first dose of the Pfizer vaccine on Monday at Trillium's Queensway location.

She said the experience was great for her health, local residents, family and friends.

Rego said she has witnessed the devastation caused by COVID-19 to residents of her long care home as well as his colleagues and others.

She herself tested positive for the virus in April and had to do self-isolate

for a month before returning to work.

"I am honoured to be the first of many in our community to receive this vaccine," said Rego. "This milestone moment marks a welcome and positive turning point for long-term care and I am proud to have rolled up my sleeve not only for my health, but also for our residents, family and friends."

Health care workers working in long-term care homes will be the first to be vaccinated in the Peel Region.

Trillium Health is one of 17 health care providers in the province that would receive the Pfizer vaccine in the coming weeks, the province said Friday.

Presented by: *Tim Hortons*

❤️ MCS

NYE PLAYLIST

Find it on **MUSIC** **Spotify**

Jackson's Toy Drive Catches Santa's Attention

On Dec. 11, at Downey's Farm in Caledon, Santa himself thanked seven year-old Jackson for his exceptional goodwill and ensured Jackson's place on the "Nice List."

Collecting toys for the Toys for Tots has been Jackson's annual, and in some ways, life mission. Since before he was able to walk, his mother has encouraged him to give to other children in

need by collecting gifts for Toys for Tots every year.

His motivation and generosity have grown over the years. Jackson's 7th annual toy drive collected a whopping 150 toys for the cause this season, despite the limitations of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Toys for Tots, a campaign partnership between the Salvation Army, Peel Regional Police, and

many other community stakeholders is a wonderful way for the community to provide gifts to children whose families are vulnerable and in need over the winter holidays.

Family and friends continue to support Jackson's efforts in the cause and have continued to share their blessings with those who need the most support at this time of year.

This year is one of considerable significance.

Kind and generous acts of this magnitude by young citizens of

Peel Region speak to a brighter future and a Safer Community Together. Anyone wishing to donate to Toys

for Tots is welcome to donate online by visiting donate.salvationarmy.ca/page/69024/donate/1.



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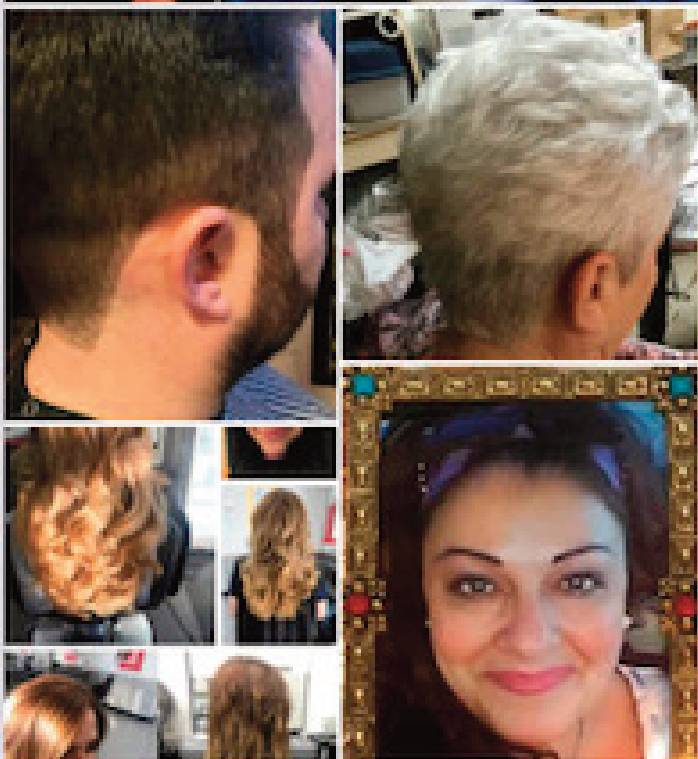
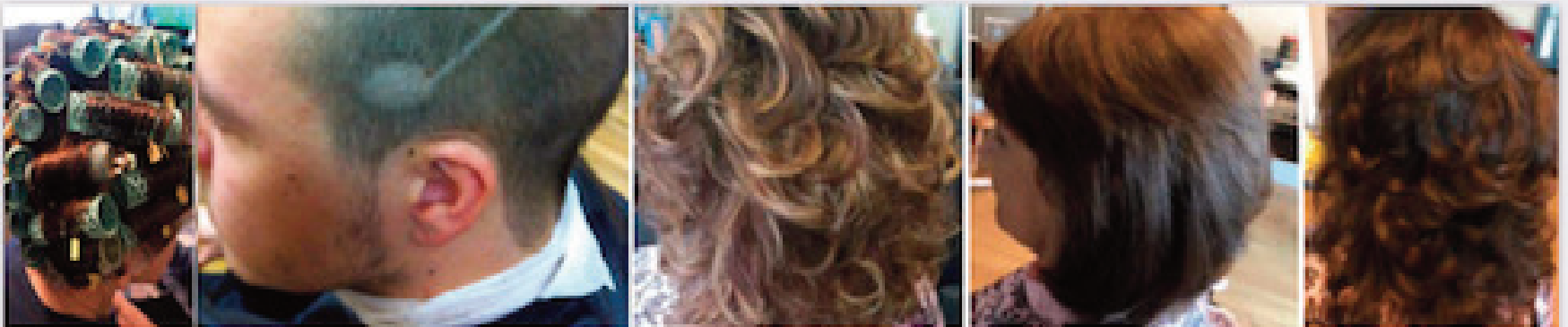
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BUSINESS

Brampton PPE supplier stopped by Health Canada over licence row

by Alex Gregory

Health Canada is warning customers who bought personal protective equipment (PPE) from a Brampton supplier to dispose of them immediately.

The federal agency said Tuesday that an unspecified quantity of PPE, including N95 masks, isolation gowns, face shields, cloth masks and more were seized from Maskopia (formerly Medkem Canada), which operates its head office in Brampton, after it was discovered that the company did not have a licence to sell such equipment.

According to the agency, the company sold PPE through various channels, including social media and buy-and-sell sites such as Kijiji, without the required Medical Device Establishment Licence (MDEL).

The agency said that Maskopia also flouted regulations regarding the continued sale of such products, regarding direct intervention.

"Despite Health Canada's direction to stop (the) sale, the company continued to sell its isolation gowns to various health care practitioners and consumers," an

agency spokesperson said in a statement Tuesday. "Maskopia has also falsely advertised and sold non-medical masks as medical masks."

The company attempted to apply

for an interim order to sell its gowns through COVID-19 federal regulations, though Health Canada rejected its application because it did not meet the requirements.

Various products,

including the aforementioned masks, gowns, face shields, cloth masks, disposable surgical masks and latex/vinyl gloves were seized by the agency, which has advised residents to

stop using the products and to dispose of them, as they may not provide the level of protection advertised due to unknown quality and safety.



Medtronic introduces "micro" pacemaker

Brampton's Medtronic Canada announced Tuesday that it has been given the greenlight for a new miniature pacemaker that could change the way patients with heart problems live their life.

The company, which operates its Canadian head office near the Brampton/Mississauga border, said it had received Health Canada approval for Micra AV, which is designed to treat patients who have AV block, a condition in which the electrical connection between the chambers of the heart (the atria and the ventricle) is impaired.

The technology is billed as the first pacemaker in

Canada to use "leadless" technology, and will allow additional patients suffering from heart problems to access the new implant.

"Medtronic remarkably changed healthcare 63 years ago with the first battery powered pacemakers, and we are proud to continue pioneering in the field of pacing by offering the first miniaturized, leadless pacing portfolio," said Mitch Leschuk, senior director of the Cardiovascular portfolio at Medtronic Canada.

"Micra AV reinvents our own innovation, expanding the benefits of leadless pacemakers to more patients."

Historically, pa-

tients with AV block had traditional dual-chamber pacemakers implanted in the upper chest, below the collar bone, and connected to the heart using thin

wires called "leads."

The Micra AV pacemaker has several additional features, including internal atrial sensing algorithms which detect cardiac movement, al-

lowing the device to adjust pacing in the ventricle to coordinate with the atrium, providing "AV synchronous" pacing therapy to patients with AV block.

Medtronic also runs regional offices in Montreal and Vancouver, and a Medtronic Resource Centre in Surrey, BC.



New LTC homes get the greenlight from province

Two new long-term care (LTC) facilities in Mississauga have been given the greenlight for construction by the province, as part of a bid to shore up a lack of access for residents in the community.

The province announced last week that EllisDon had been awarded a construction agreement to build two new LTC homes on Speakman Drive in Mississauga.

The funding, awarded by Trillium Health Partners and Infrastructure On-

tario, was given after a two-stage accelerated procurement process, and will add over 600 beds to the city's capacity for long-term care, along with behaviour support units for patients who have dementia, a proposed 16-unit dialysis space and more.

"(This) announcement is another exciting step in the development of much-needed long-term care beds in Mississauga," said Mississauga Lakeshore MPP Rudy Cuzzetto. "This new innova-

tive health centre.. (is) supporting our aging population, and ensuring that they receive quality care that is compassionate, dignified, and maintains their quality of life."

The project is targeting completing by early 2022, said representatives close to the project.

"This announcement marks the next step in the journey to bring much-needed long-term care to the residents of Mississauga. The accelerated construction means faster access to

modern, safe long-term care homes for our most vulnerable seniors," said Trillium Health Partners CEO Michelle DiEmanuele.

This project is part of the provinces Accelerated Build Pilot Program, which aims to deliver new long-term care homes years sooner than traditional development projects through the use of hospital-owned land, rapid procurement and modular construction.

Design refinements, permitting and municipal approvals, execution of subcontracts and pricing of supplies must also be completed before major construction can begin, the province said in a statement. Work to prepare the site is underway and construction is expected to begin in early 2021, and finish by early 2022.

THP will work with Infrastructure Ontario to manage construction and commissioning of the project. The completed long-term care homes will be owned and operated by a new not-for-profit corporation.

Watchdog orders new rules for refunds on flight cancellations

The federal government is urging the Canadian Transportation Agency to instruct airlines to refund passengers for canceled flights.

In a statement issued earlier this week, Federal Transport Minister Marc Garneau said the epidemic had left a huge gap in the protection provided by airlines to their passengers.

This protection has not been designed for such a long period, prompting a response from the department.

Garneau said that in view of such conditions in the future, the gap needs to be closed so that travelers can be treated fairly.

Nowhere in the current CTA rules is it stated that if an airline makes alternative arrangements for transporting passengers to their destination within the stipulated time frame, there is no need to refund the passenger concerned.

For example, if a blizzard strikes somewhere and the

passenger is offered the next day's flight, the airline will not have to refund.

But passenger advocates say the rule should not work if ticket holders are delayed indefinitely, as is the case now.

At the same time, efforts are being made to persuade the government through lobbying to ensure that airlines refund cash vouchers instead of travel vouchers for flights canceled due to COVID-19 at busy airports, such as Pearson International Airport in Mississauga.

According to Gabor Lucas, founder of Air Passenger Rights, the cancellation of flights due to COVID-19 has affected 3.9 million passengers.

Therefore, the agency is launching a public consultation from now until Jan. 28 to get answers to such questions as well as other related issues.

Look for additional coverage of this story in future editions of Peel Weekly News.



Presented by: *Tim Hortons.*

 **MCS**

NYE PLAYLIST

Find it on  **MUSIC**  **Spotify**

RIDE Program Funding Announced for Dufferin-Caledon

by Sylvia Jones, MPP

Dufferin-Caledon MPP Sylvia Jones announced Monday that Dufferin-Caledon will be receiving funding through to 2022 for the Reduce Impaired Driving Everywhere (RIDE) grant program, as part of a larger investment of \$4.8 million province-wide.

OPP Dufferin-Orangethorpe will receive \$10,393 for 2020/2021, and \$13,243 for the 2021/2022 calendar year, while OPP Caledon will receive \$15,593 for 2020/21 and \$15,562 for

2021/22. The Ontario government is investing \$4.8 million through the RIDE grant program to help police services across the province keep impaired drivers off streets and highways.

171 police services will receive funding to carry out important year-round road safety initiatives such as education campaigns and roadside spot checks. "Driving impaired, whether from drugs or alcohol is not only illegal, it can be fatal. Making alternate

plans to get home safely only takes a minute, and it can save your life and the lives of others," said Jones.

"With the holiday season upon us, education campaigns and roadside spot checks are vital tools in the police arsenal to inform people about the dangers of driving impaired and the ways to keep our roads and highways safe."

RIDE grant funding will be used to cover the overtime of sworn officers and paid duty RIDE activities over 2020/21

and 2021/22.

All municipal and First Nations police services and OPP municipal contract locations are eligible for funding under the RIDE grant program.

"Despite the challenges that the COVID-19 pandemic has created, Caledon OPP is continuing to conduct an active Festive RIDE campaign in our community over the Holiday Season. We recognize that impaired driving, both by alcohol and drugs, is a major road safety issue in Caledon, and

is a contributing factor in many serious and fatal motor vehicle collisions. Funding received by the Town of Caledon from the Ontario Government's RIDE Grant Program for 2020/21 - 2021/22 allows for additional OPP enforcement and increased directed patrols of the areas that experience increased numbers of impaired driving and impaired-related collisions," said Caledon OPP Detachment Commander Mike Garant. "With a few weeks of the Festive

RIDE campaign still ahead of us, Caledon OPP will continue its efforts to take impaired drivers off our roadways, and by doing so, prevent potential tragedies and ensure that members of the public get home safely to their families during this holiday season.

"Every year, Dufferin OPP receives funding in the form of grants which we utilize to increase the frequency of RIDE initiatives in the County," said Dufferin OPP Detachment Commander Nicol Randall.

The Man Behind the Vaccine - Who Is Dr. Ugur Sahin?

by Surjit Singh Flora

Dr. Ugur Sahin and Ozlem Tureci are a married couple making waves throughout the world right now.

Two years ago, Sahin made a bold prediction at a conference of infectious disease experts in the German capital, Berlin, that his company would launch its own RNA technology.

At that time, little was known about Sahin and his company, BioNTech. His company, co-founded with Ozlem Tureci, focused on cancer treatments.

Until then, the company had not brought any product to the market, and there was no existence of 'COVID-19', but their prediction came true.

Last month, BioNTech and Pfizer announced that the coronavirus vaccine developed by Sahin and his team has been more than 90 per cent effective in preventing the disease.

These results put BioNTech and Pfizer at the forefront of the race to

cure the epidemic that has claimed the lives of more than 12 million people worldwide.

In January, Dr. Sahin read an article in the medical journal The Lancet and was convinced that COVID-19, which was spreading rapidly in some parts of China at the time, would turn into an epidemic. At the same time, he cancelled his company's scientists' vacation and started working on a vaccine in addition to the project 'Light-Speed'.

In an interview, Dr. Sahin said that, "There aren't many companies in the world that have the capacity and speed to develop a vaccine-like ours. It didn't feel like an opportunity, and it was a duty because I thought maybe we should get the first vaccine."

After identifying several possible vaccines, Dr. Sahin concluded that the company would need help in conducting rapid testing, obtaining confirmation from

regulators, and bringing the best vaccine to market.

Since 2018, BioNTech and Pfizer have been cooperating to develop influenza vaccines and agreed to develop a coronavirus vaccine in March this year.

Dr. Sahin was born in Turkey. When he was four years old, his family moved to Germany, and his parents started working in a Ford factory. Aspiring to become a doctor since childhood, Dr. Sahin became a doctor at Cologne University. In 1993, he received a doctorate for his work on immunotherapy in tumour cells.

Early in his career, he met Tureci, who first wanted to be a nun, but eventually became a doctor.

Today, Tureci is the chief medical officer of BioNTech. Born in Germany, Tureci is the daughter of a Turkish doctor who came here from Istanbul.

The day they got married, Dr. Sahin and Dr. Tureci returned to the lab for

work after marriage.

The duo initially focused on research and teaching. At the University of Zurich, Dr. Sahin also worked in the laboratory of Rolf Zinkernagel, who was awarded the Nobel Prize in Medicine in 1996.

In 2001, Dr. Sahin and Dr. Tureci founded Ganyemed Pharmaceuticals, which developed drugs to treat cancer using monoclonal antibodies.

Many years later, he founded BioNTech, which aims to spread awareness about cancer in North America via a wide range of technologies.

Even before the epidemic, his company was booming. It has raised hundreds of millions of dollars and now has more than 1,800 employees, with offices in Berlin and other German cities and Cambridge. In 2018, it began its partnership with Pfizer.

In 2019, Dr. Sahin was awarded the Mustafa Award, a two-year Iranian

honourarium for Muslims in science and technology.

In 2016, Dr. Sahin and Dr. Tureci sold his company, Ganyemed, for \$1.4 billion Euros.

BioNTech was listed on the stock exchange last year and has surpassed \$21 billion in recent months, making them the wealthiest couple in Germany.

The two billionaires live with their teenage daughter in a modest apartment near their office. They don't have a car and go to work on bicycles.

According to Pfizer CEO Albert Bourla, "He has a very unique personality. They only care about science. Don't like to discuss business at all. He is a scientist and theorist. I have 100 per cent confidence in them."

Dr. Sahin is an immigrant who has been the subject of debate and politics in Germany, but he does not have time for it. BioNTech has been so busy developing the vaccine that the company has not yet finalized

its agreement with Pfizer.

"Trust and personal relationships are significant in such a business because everything is happening so fast," says Sahin.

It is worth mentioning here that Dr. Ugur Sahin and his wife became fed up with Turkey's destructive policies.

Sahin fled to Germany and set up his own company there, and the American company with which he has struck a deal to market his vaccine to the owners of Pfizer also emigrated from Greece to the United States.

Nowadays, while the economic crisis in all countries is trying to prevent immigrants from coming to their countries by adopting anti-immigrant attitudes, these are two great examples of both vaccine manufacturers and distributors. Are

Wherever there is economic freedom, new beliefs will surely gain strength.

New equity office set to launch in 2021

Diversity, inclusion and equity will be the words of the day, as Brampton announced earlier this month that a dedicated office for fairness and diversity will open next year.

The new “Equity Office,” announced at the city’s regular council meeting on Dec. 9, is aimed at removing barriers in the workplace and the community, and is planned to host several specialized units, including the Indigenous Reconciliation Project,

Black African and Caribbean Social, Cultural and Economic Empowerment and Anti-Black Racism Unit, and other initiatives, according to city representatives.

“Throughout 2020, the city has continued to work towards removing barriers for staff and residents, launching (these initiatives), and creating more opportunities in Brampton for certified diverse businesses,” said Wards 1 & 5 regional councillor Rowena San-

tos, who chairs the city’s Corporate Services Division. “The new Equity Office is another significant step that will help us ensure everyone in our city is treated fairly and equitably.”

The new office, which is part of a five-year workplace diversity plan the city launched late last year, will set out opportunities to foster a more inclusive organizational culture that engages, develops and celebrates its people, and attracts a di-

verse workforce.

The strategy has four priorities:

- Grow a diverse workforce reflective of the community the City of Brampton serves

- Foster a more inclusive environment where individuals say, stay, and strive

- Develop awareness and ability of all employees for diversity and inclusion to thrive

- Celebrate uniqueness and shared successes by upholding the City’s values of trust, integrity, courage and compassion

“Brampton is an incredibly diverse community, (and) the new Equity Office is an important next step in our city’s ongoing work to foster an inclusive culture that engages, develops and celebrates our people, and attract a diverse workforce,” said the city’s chief administrative officer, David Barrick.



Canadians giving less to charities: Survey

Canadians recognize COVID-19 has sharply increased demand for charitable services yet donations are falling, according to two new studies from Imagine Canada, which represents charities.

The first study – Imagine Canada’s Sector Monitor Survey – was conducted in November and December to examine the impact of COVID-19 on charities nine months after the onset of the pandemic.

A second survey conducted in conjunction with CanadaHelps and designed to explore the pandemic’s influence on the giving intentions of Canadians this holiday season was also fielded in early December.

Findings from these studies paint a stark picture of declining revenues and rising demand for charitable services due to the health crisis.

Imagine Canada’s Sector Monitor Study shows that 68 per cent of charities have seen a decline in do-

nations since the onset of the pandemic. With demand for services trending upward – 46 per cent of charities are reporting an increase in demand versus a 35 per cent surge early in the pandemic. As a result, Charities are being stretched to do more even though their service capacities have either declined or remained about the same.

Seventy percent of charities also report a decline in the number of volunteers since the onset of the pandemic, and 74% have seen a decline in the number of volunteer hours they receive.

More than eight-in-ten Canadians (81 per cent) believe the need for charitable services has risen during the pandemic. Yet only 51 per cent of Canadians say they plan to donate to charities this holiday season.

“With demand rising and revenues falling, charities face a perfect storm this holiday season,” says Bruce MacDonald, President and CEO, Imagine Canada.

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RIDE Program Funding Announced for Dufferin-Caledon

by Sylvia Jones, MPP

Dufferin-Caledon MPP Sylvia Jones announced Monday that Dufferin-Caledon will be receiving funding for through to 2022 for the Reduce Impaired Driving Everywhere (RIDE) grant program, as part of a larger investment of \$4.8 million province-wide.

OPP Dufferin-Orangethorpe will receive \$10,393 for 2020/2021, and \$13,243 for the 2021/2022 calendar year, while OPP Caledon will receive \$15,593 for 2020/21 and \$15,562 for 2021/22.

The Ontario government is investing \$4.8 million through the RIDE grant program to help police services across the province keep impaired drivers off streets and highways.

171 police services will receive funding to carry out important year-round road safety initiatives such as education campaigns and roadside spot

checks. "Driving impaired, whether from drugs or alcohol is not only illegal, it can be fatal. Making alternate plans to get home safely only takes a minute, and it can save your life and the lives of others," said Jones.

"With the holiday season upon us, education campaigns and roadside spot checks are vital tools in the police arsenal to inform people about the dangers of driving impaired and the ways to keep our roads and highways safe."

RIDE grant funding will be used to cover the overtime of sworn officers and paid duty RIDE activities over 2020/21 and 2021/22.

All municipal and First Nations police services and OPP municipal contract locations are eligible for funding under the RIDE grant program.

"Despite the challenges that the COVID-19 pandemic has created,

Caledon OPP is continuing to conduct an active Festive RIDE campaign in our community over the Holiday Season. We recognize that impaired driving, both by alcohol and drugs, is a major road safety issue in Caledon, and is a contributing factor in many serious and fatal motor vehicle collisions. Funding received by the Town of Caledon from the Ontario Government's RIDE Grant Program for 2020/21 - 2021/22 allows for additional OPP enforcement and increased directed patrols of the areas that experience increased numbers of impaired driving and impaired-related collisions," said Caledon OPP Detachment Commander Inspector Mike Garant. "With a few weeks of the Festive RIDE campaign still ahead of us, Caledon OPP will continue its efforts to take impaired drivers off our roadways, and

by doing so, prevent potential tragedies and ensure that members of the public get home safely to their families during this holiday season.

"Every year, Dufferin OPP receives funding in the form of grants which we utilize to increase the frequency of RIDE initiatives in the County," said Dufferin OPP Detachment Commander Nicol Randall.

"Year after year, drivers continue to make the choice to

drink alcohol or to ingest marijuana to the extent that their ability to operate their motor vehicle becomes impaired. Year after year, these decisions often result in tragedy that was and is completely avoidable."

"Unfortunately every year our officers arrest and charge numerous people with impaired driving," said Shelburne Police Chief Kent Moore. "The R.I.D.E. Grant funding we receive

allows us to conduct regular spot-checks which greatly assist our service in keeping our roadways safe, educating the public and at the same time serves as a very effective deterrent."

According to provincial data, more than 1,700 people have died and over 25,000 people have been injured in collisions involving an impaired driver in the last decade in Ontario.



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SPORTS

Steelheads Set to Resume Play in 2021

by David Robinson

The sports industry has taken a real serious hit over the last few months as the world struggles to rid itself of the terrible COVID-19 virus.

After cancelling their 2019-2020 season, the Mississauga Steelheads of the OHL were reasonably confident that they can resume play at their home rink, The Paramount Fine

Foods Centre, on Feb. 1, 2021.

After numerous meetings with the OHL, league owners and local health authorities, the team is moving ahead with a return-to-play plan subject to the changing landscape that is our new life in the COVID era.

The plan was to recall the players to a short mid-January

training camp, and then begin an abbreviated 40 game season on Feb. 1.

However, the OHL made the decision Wednesday to delay the start of the 2020-21 season. Training camps had been scheduled to begin in mid-January, and many players were set to report to their teams in early January, and games were

scheduled to commence on February 4, 2021.

The League said Wednesday that it will continue to consult and work closely with Governments and health authorities to determine potential start dates in the new year.

"Everything is a moving target right now," states Elliott Kerr, the team owner and president of Landmark Sport Group.

"We are all new at running a sports team during a pandemic. We are doing the best we can while keeping health and safety paramount," adds Kerr.

Imported players from European countries will most likely not be able to play, at least initially, due to travel restrictions.

That may change as the season progresses - and only if the COVID situation improves.

The team intends to play at the Paramount Fine Foods Centre, but that could change if the lockdown in Peel is not lifted.

A bubble situation

similar to the NHL and NBA is on the table for discussion with the owners as a fall back plan.

In terms of fan support, fans most likely will not be able to watch the games in person, at least initially, for obvious reasons, but that could change as the team moves further into the season.

All games will be televised on local TV and radio play by play will be available on AM 960.

Kerr was also pleased to announce that the entire coaching and training staff is returning.

This is great news as the team ventures forth into a hockey season that will be challenging, to say the least.

In addition, all of the sponsors are still backing the team which is really encouraging when the team will face obvious financial challenges with no gate receipts.

In other news, the team is pleased to announce that defenceman Thomas Harley has been chosen to represent Canada at

the World junior Championships, which are set to begin Christmas day in Edmonton.

Harley is the team's top defenceman, and was drafted 18 th overall by the Dallas Stars in 2019.

He was with the Stars during their 2020 Stanley Cup run, eventually losing to the Tampa Bay Lightning.

Mr. Kerr speaks very highly of this player and wishes him all the best as he tries to bring home gold for Canada.

For more information on the Steelheads, go to mississaugasteelheads.com.

Dave Robinson is a 37-year Mississauga resident with passion for a variety of sports, including hockey, skiing, snowshoeing, triathlons, golf and windsurfing.

When he is not writing about sports, he can be found running the Credit River trails or riding his bike out toward Milton.



Brissett a no-go for Raptors as team changes tactics

That's a wrap. Mississauga native Oshae Brissett will not be joining the Toronto Raptors this season - being waived by the team, along with two others, just before they opened their 2020-21 run Wednesday evening.

Brissett, who went to Syracuse University and was an undrafted free agent with the team in the 2019-20 sea-

son, playing 19 games and averaging 1.9 points per game, was not called up for the team alongside fellow picks Henry Elenson and Elize Johnson.

Brissett also spent time with the Raptors 905, playing throughout the 2018-19 season, which propelled the team to give him a shot in the big leagues.



Return of the NHL in a pandemic doesn't mean OHL return



Roger Lajoie
Sports Scene

The National Hockey League made it official this week – they plan to start the NHL regular season on Jan. 13.

That is great news for fans of NHL.

Although the challenges ahead for the league to be able to pull this off are substantial, the methodical approach the league has taken to its return will help to ensure the safety of players and staff during this crushing second wave of the pandemic.

No matter what, this is going to be a very difficult year financially for the NHL.

The main reason the NHL is even attempting to play a season is this – it needs to protect the long-term franchise value of its teams. It's not just about this season.

Not getting in a season this year while the NBA, NFL and MLB all manage

to play would be detrimental to the NHL moving forward.

The league has corporate sponsors to appease and a TV deal to provide content for. So even though it has the smallest TV contract of the Big 4 North American pro sports leagues by far, it feels an obligation to endure a season with little or no fans for the second time if only for optics.

The NHL is a gate driven league – without gate revenues it is a money losing proposition for more than a few of its teams.

The hub city scenario was different. The NHL had already played most of its regular season by then; the league was just trying to meet final TV obligations and declare a champion.

Now they are starting a brand new one so the potential for

big losses for many of its team is very high.

It is not cheap to try and play hockey in a pandemic. The fact that the NHL is settling for a 56 game season instead of trying to fit more games in demonstrates how reliant they are on paid attendance.

The hope remains that maybe by the playoffs some fans can return, but if they don't the financial problem will be even bigger.

I'm not crying for these teams. A pro sports franchise is a high stake venture for billionaires.

I'm just saying this because if anyone is assuming that the NHL's return means leagues like the OHL are close behind, they don't understand the economics of the hockey world.

OHL teams badly want to play. It's what they do. The cancellation of the Memorial Cup last spring was devastating in a lot of ways, and not just financially.

Junior hockey is a vital cog in the hockey ecosystem. It is where players de-

velop into future pros. It's a decent business in many markets.

It's important to the communities that have teams, including right here in Mississauga with the Steelheads.

But the OHL is not the NHL. The OHL isn't going to play just so it can do its part to keep the hockey pipeline running smoothly.

It can't afford to do that.

Ontario is headed into a province-wide lockdown for 28 days, starting Boxing Day. Only essential services are open.

That means no OHL activities allowed at all until at least Jan. 23.

Who even knows when those restrictions will be lifted – and training camps need to open before anybody can play.

COVID is an ever-evolving situation. There is hope on the horizon with vaccines. However, the short term hope for a return to anything close to normal is gone.

The OHL will not be starting up any-

time soon, as badly as some of their teams and all of their players may want to.

The long-term viability of junior hockey will not be jeopardized if in the worst case it can't return before fans can return.

It's painful for everybody, but here's what would be more painful – OHL teams trying to operate for a full season with no spectators in the building.

I'm of the belief that if you privately asked the 20 OHL teams if they can afford to play or not, perhaps as many as 17 would say they can't. They won't admit that publically but that is the case. It won't be possible for some teams to sustain the losses.

The NHL is coming back to help save its business; if the OHL came back too soon it would destroy its business.

For the time being, the OHL has to wait. Things can change.

Perhaps with any luck, by maybe March we'll have available rapid testing everywhere

and/or the vaccines will be in distribution enough to allow for some fans in all arenas.

That would leave time for an abbreviated regular season followed by playoffs. It wouldn't be much, but it would be something. And during a pandemic we should all just take what we can get.

It will be great to see the NHL playing again. It will be great to watch the world junior hockey championships in a bubble over the holidays.

Goodness knows we could all use the diversion.

But the return of the NHL has nothing to do with the return of the OHL. Unlike pro hockey, junior hockey must have crowds back before it can return.

—
Roger Lajoie is a sports talk show host on Sportsnet 590 The Fan.

He's been in the sports media business for 40 years, and was Vice President of the Mississauga St. Michael's Majors in 2011-12.

A happy life... is a life that balances work and play

by **Teammates**

It is perhaps the biggest challenge we all face in our lives – how do we achieve more success and still have some balance?

Does great success in our careers always have to come with great sacrifice in our personal life?

Where is the happy medium for those of us who want more from our careers, but still want to enjoy our family, friends, hobbies, etc.? Is it really “either/or” when it comes to having ultimate achievements?

It can be very difficult to find balance in life. On one hand, the world is saying

that you have to dedicate thousands and thousands of hours to your craft to become great (the 10,000 hour rule).

On the other hand, the world is saying nobody ever died wishing they had spent more time at the office.

No wonder we make ourselves miserable sometimes just thinking about this!

It's not easy finding balance, but here are three steps to follow.

1. Stop listening to the world. Listen to your heart instead.

Everybody's definition of success is different.

We all want more out of life but everybody's definition of “more” is different. We sometimes create stress just thinking about the stress we are under to try and do everything.

Stop. Breathe. Ask yourself what is most important to YOU – not what you think is most important to the world.

Once you answer that question honestly, it's easier to live your values. Not everyone wants or needs to be a billionaire – really! And not everyone finds the thought of working 80 hours a week awful either. Really!

Continued on Next Page



Continued from Last Page

2. Have a vision for your life. Many of us spend more time planning our vacations than we do our careers. The biggest reason people don't have what they want in life is that they don't know what they want. Once you visualize what an ideal life looks like for you, it will be easier to prioritize what matters the most. Everybody should have a "To Do List" but that list should be prioritized with most important items first, not just random things to do. Tie them to your vision and watch how much easier life gets for you.

3. Practice mindfulness. When you are here, be here.

Living in the moment helps you really absorb the work you need to do, and really helps you enjoy your leisure to the fullest.

Multi-tasking is passé – the best way to get things done is to fully concentrate on one thing at a time.

For example, if you can only manage to play with your kids for an hour today because work is calling, then make the absolute best of that hour.

Don't live yesterday, today and tomorrow at the same time.

A full hour of total engagement with your family is better than two hours of being distracted and on your phone while you are with them.

There is a great parable of a rich old American tourist who is visiting Mexico and on a boat. He is enjoying his time and sees a young local man working hard to make the tourists happy.

He calls the young man over and asks him what he does.

"I work on the boat all day, from 9 to 5," he says. "I am an employee, been here for several years."

The rich tourist then asks him what he does after 5 pm.

"Most days I have dinner and then go to the beach and hang around to play my guitar with my friends."

The rich tourist shakes his head. "Young man, you can do better than that. You should get here even earlier, work later, and one day, you won't just work on the boat, you will own the boat! And if you work really hard, you can own several! Then you will be rich like me and

be successful, not just a worker!"

The young man considers this and looks at the rich old tourist. "Then what will I do?" he asks.

The rich old tourist gets impatient and yells "Well then you can go hang around on the beach and play your guitar with your friends!"

What do you want

in life, friends? Live your values, not the values of a rich old tourist, or a young worker who doesn't want to be an owner, or anyone else. Do what is important to YOU.

Everyone's definition of success is different. Develop a clear vision for what you want and a plan, then live your life accordingly.

When you do that, you'll find it is much easier to achieve balance between work and play.

Then by all means go out and work hard and play hard – and live in the moment. We only have moments to live after all!

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LIFESTYLE / AROUND TOWN

Insurance provider gives back to local club

The Boys & Girls Club of Peel picked up a special pre-holiday Christmas donation last week, when Jessie Mann, financial advisor for The Co-operators in Brampton, announced a donation of \$8,000 to the Club.

The funding will help the organization fund The Holiday Hamper program, which provides support in the form of toys, clothes and food for families in need.

“Our donation today helps address important community needs,” Mann said at a cheque presentation, held last week. “We invest our profits into action and advocacy that makes the world a better place.”

The funding was provided by Mann with the support of The Co-operators Advisor Community Fund, through which the business uses to demonstrate its commitment to sustainability

and showcase leadership in the community.

“Working with a local and National organization like The Co-operators that has the understanding of what families across the region, province and country needs is a true gift for our BGC Peel (Boys & Girls Club), especially during these uncertain times,” said Michael J. Gyovai, executive director of BGC Peel.

These uncertain times,” said Michael J. Gyovai, executive director of BGC Peel.

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Christmas breakfast raises \$33k for local charity

The revamped outdoor version of a popular Christmas fundraiser brought in an astounding \$33,000 for a local food bank.

The Streetsville Christmas Breakfast, an annual

tradition held in partnership with 'Twas The Bite Before Christmas, held its inaugural contactless drive-thru fundraising breakfast on Dec. 12 in the parking lot of Drake A Firkin Pub in Streetsville.

The annual event, which was previously held indoors, saw over 650 vehicles pass through the parking lot over the course of three hours, where they were greeted by special guests, received Christmas

wreaths, candy canes and more - along with a hot or cold breakfast - before departing to enjoy their meals.

The event, which was hosted in benefit of Eden Food For Change, was organized in

compliance with COVID-19 physical distancing and safety protocols, with a fully-contactless method of distributing breakfasts and additional goodies for guests.

The initiative brought together community stakeholders, including first responders, businesses, local artists, media, volunteers and the public in the spirit of giving.

The event continues to be organized at a \$0 cost as a result of generous in-kind donations, ensuring 100 per cent of the funds benefit the charity.

The community made a remarkable combined donation totalling more than

(\$33,000) during a three-hour period, as revealed at a special cheque presentation ceremony in Mississauga on Friday.

Eden Food For Change (edenFFC.org) is a local food centre serving the Mississauga community in need by providing access to healthy, fresh and nutritious food.

EFFC also provides education and training through an in-house learning kitchen where members prepare healthy meals providing transferable skills for future employability.



Celebrating Christmas - A Universal Holiday

by Vidya Gopaul

As we all know, Christmas is a special occasion when we celebrate the birth of Christ, which happened more than two thousand years ago in Bethlehem.

Bethlehem lies ten kilometres south of the city of Jerusalem, in the fertile limestone hill country of the Holy

Land. Since at least the second century A.D., people have believed that the place where the Church of the Nativity, Bethlehem, now stands is where Jesus was born.

Together with my family, I had the privilege to visit the Church of the Nativity in 1998, on our the

way to our Baha'i pilgrimage to Haifa, Israel.

We took a taxi from Haifa where we were staying in the hotel to go to Bethlehem. Just north of Haifa, in Lebanon, we could hear the sound of bombings - and yet, when we reached the entrance of the Church of

Nativity, you could feel the tranquility, peace, joy.

Most importantly, you get a spiritual experience which is literally out of this world - you cannot explain it; you can only experience it.

The entrance is very small, and hence you have to bend to enter, which in my opinion shows a sign of respect and reverence.

From outside, the church looks like a very simple old building, but when you enter, inside it is totally different.

It is very beautiful, exquisite and it lifts your spirit so high that you can feel you can touch the heaven.

We were blessed and fortunate to see the exact place

where Christ was born, the spot where he was given the bath before his crucifixion and the place where the three Marys stood to see their beloved soul was being carried to be crucified.

We also saw the exact place Christ was crucified, the cave where His body was laid to rest and later on He was resurrected.

Not too many of us get to see this special place, but we were very fortunate to feel that experience once in a lifetime.

Christmas is a universal celebration which is celebrated in every corner of the world by almost every walks of life, regardless of one's religious beliefs. It is more prevalent in Canada than in anywhere in the world.

With the advent of globalization and allowing so many immigrants to come to Canada, inter-faith marriages have increased dramatically - Hindus marrying Christians, Jews marrying Christians, Muslim marrying Christians, Muslims marrying Sikhs, Tamil marrying Muslims and so on.

Yet, the one thing that they all have, in most

part, in common is Christmas.

Christmas is the only religious celebration that I have seen that have taken precedence in a multicultural family.

Christmas is the only time we all come together; either we are Baha'i, Hindu, Muslim, Jew, Buddhist, Tamil, Telegu, Sikh and Jain to name a few.

This is the only celebration that binds us all together, either we are white, black, blue, brown, yellow or any other colour, at least for one day and that is on Christmas day.

I have seen families who resisted to celebrate Christmas at the beginning because of their religious or any other belief, but eventually succumb to the idea of the Christmas festival, either because of their children having more Christian friends or because they did not want to be left out during one day of togetherness.

As this year is coming to end, I wish all my fans and public at large a very Merry Christmas and a very Happy New Year for 2021. May this New-Year bring peace, love, health and happiness to you all.



ACER gets regional nod for community-engaged climate action

On Dec. 10, Peel Regional Council heard encouraging words from Brampton's Knightsbridge residents, who have been hardest hit by COVID-19.

A two-minute video of volunteers' testimonials opened the presentation by ACER – Association for Canadian Educational Resources – to report on Project Crossroads community tree planting for climate change research.

Grade 11 student Vanessa logged volunteer hours ahead of her remote learning, despite blustery early morning weather.

"I woke up early and so I thought, why not come out and help my community?" she said.

Planting events were adapted to meet pandemic restrictions, as a contribution to the City of Brampton's Sustainable Neighbourhoods Action Plan (SNAP).

Bramalea SNAP

collaborators also include Toronto and Region Conservation Authority and Peel Region – Healthy Communities Initiative. The collaboration was funded under lockdown in March 2020 by Arbor Day Foundation under the TD Green Space program.

The presentation coincided with UN Human Rights Day and the fifth anniversary of the 2015 Paris Climate Agreement.

"Results speak for themselves," said Alice Casselman, ACER's Founder and President.

"In less than nine months since COVID put Peel Region in lockdown, ACER held five community tree planting events with residents of Knightsbridge, in three distinct locations: public housing, a public park and on privately-owned property."

A total of 71 volunteers included family bubbles and secondary students

who logged 37 volunteer service hours.

A new trial to plant 153 large trees and corresponding native pollinator/bird shrubs added biomass equal to 1,840 x 1-gallon 18" trees.

Peel Region Council gave a nod to ACER's future forward result: In response to the delegation, it said, "Residents' tree growth data supports plans for future urban forest plantings and meets goals of the Peel Region Climate Change Master Plan for building community resilience with green infrastructure."

Tree equity, a deficit newly identified under the pandemic, was ACER's lead consideration to prioritize tree sites.

In 2019, ACER stakeholders collaborated prioritized sites where tree canopy is low and coincident with some of the

Region's most vulnerable neighbourhoods, in order to strongly align with objectives in the Peel Climate Change Partnership's Green/Natural Infrastructure Strategy

In 2020, Peel Public Health data showed prioritized sites were the same GIS areas most highly impacted by COVID caseload by postal code.

These areas are in or beside environmentally degraded industrialized areas.

Relief from men-

tal health distress was measurable, in ACER's COVID-19 perception survey created specifically to capture participant mood, before and after planting experiences.

To a person, participants reported an enhanced feeling of wellbeing, felt safe, and would join again in a future event.

In adapting to pandemic protocols, new outdoor/online/remote treekeeper units were designed with digital resources and training videos

posted on ACER's website.

The delegation to Peel Regional Council sought support for one of several major proposals submitted for 2021 research projects.

"2020 was a crossroads for difficult choices in extremely stormy times," says Alice. "As we go into 2021, ACER sees Project Crossroads as a silver lining, and a hopeful direction as more people can join in climate action together."



Mobile community truck revs up to help fight hunger

2020 will be remembered as the year that the entire world collectively changed due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

In response to the global health crisis, Knights

Table embarked on a new and exciting initiative of a Mobile Community Kitchen food truck through support from the federal government's COVID-19 Reaching Home funding.

The Brampton area, like the other parts of the GTA, is feeling the impact of the dramatic changes in the economy due to the pandemic.

Community Food Banks like

the Knights Table said they have felt increased pressure to meet the demands of a community in need.

The Mobile Community Kitchen food truck, launched earlier this week, is an extension of the organization's meal programs.

Food insecure individuals, families, and seniors in high needs neighbourhood will be able to access nutritious meals including breakfast, lunch and dinner.

With its new mobile community kitchen, the organization will be able to expand its reach deeper in the community to support those who are adversely touched by poverty and experiencing food insecurity across Peel.

"We understand that the most vulnerable groups in our community have been greatly affected by this crisis and with the colder weather in our midst, our food truck is a vital resource as

we re-imagine the way we meet the needs of our community," says Knights Table executive director, Annie Bynoe. "We know that for many residents, food insecurity has increased with the loss of jobs and industries. These domino effects are visible and evident. Food banks help many families in Peel, but some food banks are not opening during the pandemic."





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Locals express support for health care workers through ‘Trees of Hope’

A simple act that expresses a huge ‘thank you’ is gaining traction among neighbours in two north Mississauga communities.

Mississauga Ward 10 Councillor Sue McFadden has partnered with the residents’ associations in Lisgar and Churchill

Meadows on a project called “Trees of Hope – a salute to health care workers.”

Trees have been identified in two community parks where residents are invited to add a ribbon or decoration, expressing their appreciation of and support for

health care workers during this second wave of the COVID-19 pandemic.

“Hospital staff are under such immense stress and strain – perhaps even more now than in the first wave of the pandemic because this has been going on

so long,” McFadden said.

“And yet they continue to offer the care and support to their patients. Sometimes they’re the only ones in the hospital room, holding their hands as they take their last breath. It’s physically and mentally

draining.” In the spring during the first wave, there were several impromptu initiatives that developed whereby the public could express their appreciation for the dedicated work of health care professionals and other front-line workers.

But McFadden hasn’t seen the same kind of support in the second wave.

“I think it’s so important that our frontline workers know how much we appreciate them, especially now during the holiday season,” McFadden said.

Residents agree. “Such a beautiful idea for our health care workers,” wrote Patricia Briguglio under a photo she posted on Facebook of her

and her daughter at the Lisgar Tree of Hope.

The Trees of Hope are located at Lisgar Fields Community Park (3805 Doug Leavens Boulevard near the tennis courts) and Churchill Meadows Community Common (3715 Thomas Street near the skateboard park).

Residents are invited to adorn the tree until Dec. 31, though McFadden says there is no hard end date.

“This pandemic is far from over. If residents continue to respond, we’ll just keep going – maybe designate more trees in the parks. And maybe designate more parks across the city. All we want to do is express our thanks.”



Library system tops one million eBook/audiobook checkouts in 2020

Mississauga Library announced late last week that it had surpassed one million digital book checkouts in Nov. 2020, two months earlier than anticipated.

The milestone demonstrates the continued growth and importance of libraries and digital lending of eBooks and Audiobooks at a time when the city’s library locations are faced with building closures and service changes due to COVID-19.

Mississauga Library is one of 75 public library systems worldwide on track to surpass one million checkouts by the end of this year.

“Mississauga residents love to read and these re-

sults show it,” said Mayor Bonnie Crombie. “Now more than ever, it’s important that people of all ages have access to a wide range of eBooks and Audiobooks.”

The library offers customers 24/7 access to eBooks and Audiobooks through the Libby App by OverDrive. Reader interest and usage have increased each year, with more than 4.4 million eBooks and Audiobooks checked out since 2010.

The highest-circulating eBook borrowed in 2020 at Mississauga Library is Walk the Wire by David Baldacci.

Mississauga Library card holders can also access the digital

collections of the Burlington and Hamilton public libraries.

“Our readers have helped us reach this important milestone,” said Jennifer Stirling, Acting Director, Mississauga Library. “We are pleased to be able to make a vast collection of eBooks and Audiobooks available to our customers, especially now when we are all spending more time at home. We look forward to bringing our residents even more titles in 2021.”

The Top 10 eBook titles borrowed through Mississauga Library’s digital collection in 2020 include:

1. Walk the

Wire: Amos Decker Series, Book 6 by David Baldacci

2. Camino Winds by John Grisham

3. The Henna Artist: A Novel by Alka Joshi

4. The Guest List: A Novel by Lucy Foley

5. Too Much and Never Enough: How My Family Created the World’s Most Dangerous Man by Mary L. Trump

6. The Other Mrs.: A Novel by Mary Kubica

7. The Ballad of Songbirds and Snakes: The Hunger Games Series, Book 0 by Suzanne Collins

8. The Girls with No Names: A Novel by Serena Burdick

9. Untamed by Glennon Doyle

10. Fair Warn-

ing: Jack McEnvoy Series, Book 3 by Michael Connelly

The Top 10 Audiobook titles borrowed through Mississauga Library’s digital collection in 2020 include:

1. Camino Winds by John Grisham

2. So You Want to Talk about Race by Ijeoma Oluo

3. Too Much and Never Enough: How My Family Created the World’s Most Dangerous Man by Mary L. Trump

4. Quiet: The Power of Introverts in a World That Can’t Stop Talking by Susan Cain

5. Untamed by Glennon Doyle

6. The Guest List: A Novel by Lucy Foley

7. Me and White Supremacy: Combat Racism, Change the World, and Become a Good Ancestor by Layla F. Saad

8. The Order: A Novel by Daniel Silva

9. Walk the Wire: Amos Decker Series, Book 6 by David Baldacci

10. The River Murders by James Patterson

Anyone who lives, works or goes to school in Mississauga can register online for a library card.

Customers can use any major device.

To download the Libby app to borrow eBooks and Audiobooks anytime, from anywhere, visit mississaugalibrary.ca.

Caledon joins roster of libraries hosting digital book clubs

Caledon Public Library (CPL), alongside more than 500 other Canadian public libraries, announced this week that they will hold the first national, bilingual (English and French) digital book club.

The initiative is part of the second year of One eRead Canada, a month-long initiative coor-

minated by Canadian Urban Libraries Council (CULC), that will run from Jan. 1 - 31, 2021.

More than 80 per cent of Canadian public libraries will be offering free, unlimited access to Vi by Kim Thúy, in eBook and eAudio-book formats across different platforms.

The book will be

available in English and French – without holds or waitlists – to all CPL cardholders.

“Everyone benefits from stronger and better eContent in libraries”, says Colleen Lipp, CPL’s CEO and Chief Librarian.

“One eRead Canada is raising awareness about library access to eContent and en-

couraging dialogue about a wonderful Canadian book. This initiative falls perfectly in line with our mission to nurture connections, collaboration and creativity.”

One eRead Canada is an important initiative undertaken by CULC, which is striving to resolve the prohibitive costs and purchas-

ing restrictions public libraries face related to eContent.

CULC’s recent eContent for Libraries campaign, in which CPL actively participated, drew attention to major multinational publishers’ excessively high prices and restrictive purchasing models for eBooks and eAudiobooks.

One eRead Canada and similar programs will introduce readers and listeners to new titles and authors, positively impacting sales of digital content – to the benefit of publishers, authors, and readers.

For more information, visit caledonlibrary.on.ca.

Brampton celebrates Winter Wonderland for the holidays

The City of Brampton will be opening Mount Chinguacousy and cross-country skiing and snowshoe trails on Jan. 2, 2021, weather permitting.

Registration for the four new outdoor skating rinks located at Flower City Community Campus, Valleybrook Park (synthetic ice pilot), Morris Kerbel Park, and Earncliffe Park will begin this week.

Pop-up programming, walking path, and outdoor run club dates are also available online at brampton.ca/recreation.

Mount Chinguacousy is the city’s destination for skiing, snowboarding and tubing, located at Chinguacousy Park.

Pay-per-visit skiing, snowboarding and tubing will be available by reservation. Limited capacities have been implemented to ensure physical distancing is maintained.

Ski and snowboard equipment rentals are not available at this time.

For all information, including hours of operation, open or closed status, and reservation

details, visit brampton.ca/mountchinguacousy.

New cross-country skiing and snowshoeing trails will be available for use in January in Chinguacousy Park, weather permitting.

The trails can be accessed from the Sandra Hames Centre parking lot (Bramalea and Goodwood entrance) and are intended for independent use by residents during regular park operating hours. Residents are asked to follow posted signage guidelines and maintain safe physical distancing.

Trails are maintained by City of Brampton staff and may be closed due to inclement weather. Equipment rentals are not available at this time.

For information, including hours of operation and trail open or closed status, visit brampton.ca/winterwonderland.

The hill and trails may close due to inclement weather, including mild and wet conditions or extreme cold (temperatures below -20 degrees Celsius).

Residents are advised to check status updates online prior to their visit.

Four new outdoor skating rinks have also been installed this season, located at Flower City Community Campus, Valleybrook Park (synthetic ice pilot), Morris Kerbel Park, and Earncliffe Park.

Originally targeted to open on Dec. 18, recent warm temperatures made it necessary to allow additional time for the rinks to be flooded and for freezing to take place, the city said last week.

Gore Meadows Covered Outdoor Skating Rink, Chinguacousy Park Skate Recreational Trail, Gage Park Outdoor Skating Recreational Trail, and Mount Pleas-

ant Outdoor Skating Rink opened on Dec. 10.

For all information, including hours of operation, rink status, and reservation details, visit brampton.ca/outdoorskating.

Brampton Recreation staff will be offering Walking Path and Outdoor Run Club programs beginning Dec. 19.

Residents can enjoy these open-air activities during the winter months, while maintaining physical distancing.

The Walking Path program is intended for all ages and makes for a perfect family-friendly activity.

Residents can get outside and active

by registering for Outdoor Run Club.

This program is suitable for all activity levels, including those new to the sport.

In line with Peel Public Health recommendations, a reservation system is in place for all outdoor winter programming and for visit to all rinks and Mount Chinguacousy.

This is to ensure capacity requirements are maintained and contact tracing is possible when necessary.

Reservations for outdoor skating are available up to 36 hours in advance. Residents can reserve their spot by registering online at cityofbrampton.per

fectmind.com, calling the booking line at (905) 791-2240 or by calling Service Brampton at 311 from within city limits.

All reservations are limited to one hour in duration. Reservations are required for all patrons, including parents, guardians or others who are accompanying skaters.

Residents are asked to check in with staff at an on-site welcome tent upon their arrival.

Washrooms amenities will be available. Masks are required in line-ups and inside of the washrooms. No food or beverages are permitted at the rinks.



Health and Wellness - Living in Peace

by Elizabeth Banfalvi

Peace – what a wonderful experience! So where do we find it?

We find it within ourselves. It could take religion to understand the different variations in it and to accept what is going on? But knowing peace is what makes the difference.

Peace actually enhances serenity, equanimity and balances or counters anger, violence, or worry.

What more can we ask for? As much as we look outside ourselves to find peace, it actually begins within us.

Peace is an inner state of well-being and calm. It is also an outer projecting of promoting non-violence, conflict resolution, and cooperation in the world. So, what is causing you to not know peace?

You can begin to practice peace by

refusing to participate in violence either directly or indirectly.

You can also try to stay composed no matter how agitated the people around you become.

Your inner mirrors the outer. The conditions that upset the equilibrium of the world – anger, aggression, discord – upset our inner peace as well.

It is necessary to deal with them on both levels.

Feeling worried, upset, or "crazed" can help you to get started doing peace. These states often signify that your emotions have gotten the best of you, and a practice to restore your balance is needed.

Being even-tempered creates a feeling of serenity. And whereas being agitated can drain your energy, but

inner calm increases your stamina so that you can sustain your efforts to make a more peaceful place.

A great and wonderful method of avoiding anger is to teach yourself to speak in a lower voice. This is very effective to attaining your quality of patience.

I remember when I was teaching my workshops, to make myself feel more peaceful, I spoke in a lower slower voice. It worked.

When I was relaxed, so were the attendees of my workshop. When you do this, you make it a habit to be aware of what is going on. No rushing through what is happening. It is taking the time to learn to relax your voice and it will relax you and you will be more at peace.

When someone is

insulting you or doing something against your will, slow yourself down so you resist the urge to defend yourself or react especially when you shouldn't feel the urge to.

Not everyone is going to agree with you or want to go your way but that is how it is. Let them go to do their own way but you don't need to defend yourself.

What they think is what they want to think. So many times, I have had that happen to me and I just let it go because I wasn't willing to disrupt myself over someone else's thoughts or feeling.

Would they change to accommodate me... probably not. It will enable you to become patient with yourself but also with others.

Be aware of when you are the least

peaceful and make a journal of it. List them and they will show you where you are having difficulty. Is it really a failure or just a belief you have lived with all your life?

Now is the time to change it. So often, we have believed something from our childhood but now it is time to change that.

Pay attention to your words. Your words tell a lot about you and what you believe. Write down what you think of yourself and what is in your speech habit. Be more positive about yourself because being negative doesn't work.

One workshop I had, there was a woman that said she wanted to be perfect and I asked how she was doing. She believed she was failing all the time.

So, I asked why she believed that,

but she didn't know. So why feel like that?

Perfection is in the moment not the action. What is perfect one moment isn't the next but look to nature to find perfection.

Next look to opportunities but when you are stressed, you don't see them. When you are at peace, they are easy to see.

Opportunities surround us all the time and wait for us to move towards them. Know yourself and it will develop the peace within you. You need to know you!

So, rest in your peace rather than fight it. If you are fighting it, then it will be very difficult. Let it go and find the peace you have within you.

Peace is what we all need in the world. So, let us be at peace.





Make Your Own High-Protein Spinach Wraps at Home!

If you order a spinach and feta wrap from Starbucks every day, it's time to rethink this morning habit.

While we appreciate the "cage-free eggs" and 19 grams of protein this convenient option offers, the wrap contains a number of preservatives and 36 per cent of your recommended sodium for the whole day.

We were thrilled to find a homemade option that's lower in calories and carbs and free of preservatives.

Just like the original, this recipe is easy to

enjoy on the go – and even cook up in advance for a busy morning.

Once you take a bite, you will be delighted that the flavor and texture of this homemade hack was far more satisfying than the fast-food order.

This is a great recipe to freeze and make in advance.

To freeze, allow the wrap to cool, then store in a zip-lock bag or plastic wrap. To reheat, microwave on high for four minutes.

Ingredients (for one serving):

- one seven-inch whole-wheat tor-

tilla

- quarter-cup, sliced mushrooms
- two cups of fresh spinach

- one large egg, plus one egg white, lightly whisked

- two tablespoons, crumbled low-fat feta cheese

- one tablespoon, sun-dried tomatoes, chopped

Instructions:

Place the tortilla on a microwave-safe plate and heat on high for one minute.

Coat a small skillet with cooking spray, then place it over medium heat.

Sauté the mushrooms and pepper

for two minutes.

Stir in the spinach and sauté for another one to two minutes, or until wilted.

Add the eggs and cook, stirring often until they

are set, about two minutes.

Place the egg scramble in the center of the tortilla, then top it with the crumbled feta and sun-dried tomatoes.

To wrap, fold up one end, then both sides. Serve immediately or wrap in foil and take to go.

Total cook time is ten minutes, with 252 calories per serving.



A Tasty Treat - Healthy Baked Coconut Shrimp

Even though it may be freezing where you are, your taste buds deserve a quick trip to the tropics, and this appetizer will get rave re-

views. Typically served with a sweet and spicy Asian sauce, this version is paired with something a little creamier and with less

sugar. And the dip uses one of the most versatile ingredients out there: Greek yogurt!

Full of protein, good-for-you pro-

biotics, and calcium, Greek yogurt should be a staple in any healthy fridge.

Ingredients (for one-to-two servings):

- half-cup, flaked unsweetened coconut

- six tablespoons, plain panko bread crumbs

- three tablespoons, whole wheat flour

- two large egg whites

- one pound, large shrimp, peeled, deveined and patted dry

- salt and pepper (to taste)

- quarter-cup, low-fat Greek yogurt (for dipping

sauce)

- two tablespoons, lime juice (for dipping sauce)

- one teaspoon, ancho chili powder (for dipping sauce)

- non-stick cooking spray

Instructions:

Preheat the oven to 450°F. Spray a baking sheet with non-stick spray.

To make the dipping sauce, combine all Greek yogurt, lime juice, and chili powder in a small bowl. Set aside in the refrigerator.

Combine the coconut, panko, and flour in a bowl or baking dish.

Beat the egg whites in a

medium bowl until slightly frothy.

Season the shrimp with salt and pepper.

Add the shrimp to the egg whites; toss to coat. Lift each shrimp from the egg whites, letting the excess drip off the shrimp. Coat in the crumb mixture, pressing to adhere.

Place the shrimp on the baking sheet in a single layer. Lightly spray with non-stick spray.

Bake until the shrimp are golden on the outside and opaque in the center, 8 to 10 minutes. Serve with the dipping sauce.



More Places to Spot & Shop in Peel Region!

by E.C. Munson

There are many more delightful discoveries along those Artful Corridors of Commerce.

From Carlisle in the west to Inglewood in the northeast and then Caledon East further east yet, we next drop south and slightly west into Brampton and Mississauga to meet several new artists and artisans busy in their workshops and studios.

Acclaimed and established artist, Zan Barrage of Mississauga, has much to view on his website, www.zanbarrage.com/gallery.html.

An accomplished watercolorist and oil painter, he has a loyal following of students from his classes at both Visual Arts Mississauga and Visual Arts Brampton. Whether for gifts to others or for your own home office, his art gives light from within.



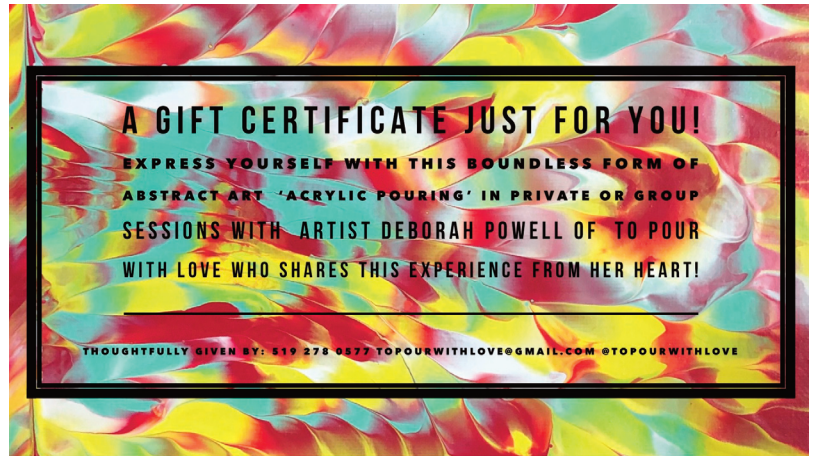
Jolanta Jung, a ceramicist works out of her home studio in Inglewood. Active on the show circuit and busy with select exhibitions, her pieces were much in demand at the recent group show, EAST Greets WEST this August at the Headwaters Arts Gallery at the Alton Mill Arts Centre. From small to mid-size bowls, vases, chimes, bells, ornaments, and sculptural pieces, her unique artistic sense of design makes these very special! Visit her website to explore the possibilities of some artful and unique gifts (www.jolantasdesignsinclay.com/about).

MaryLou Hurley is the creative force behind True Blue Lou Mosaic Studio in Caledon East. A Mixed Media Mosaic artist, she asserts that it is ALL about the BIRCHES this Christmas!

From birch mosaics, to birch wine glasses and Christmas ornaments, do make it a beautiful BIRCH holiday with gifts from a well-known local artisan and artist. Open by appointment with curbside pickup. Psst, you might remember her sculpture, The Duchess, won second prize at Headwaters Arts annual fall exhibition, The Artful Revival Festival. Currently she has work in the Beaux Arts Gallery with their Winter Art Show. You may contact her at 416-508-5701 or through her website, www.truebluelou.com.



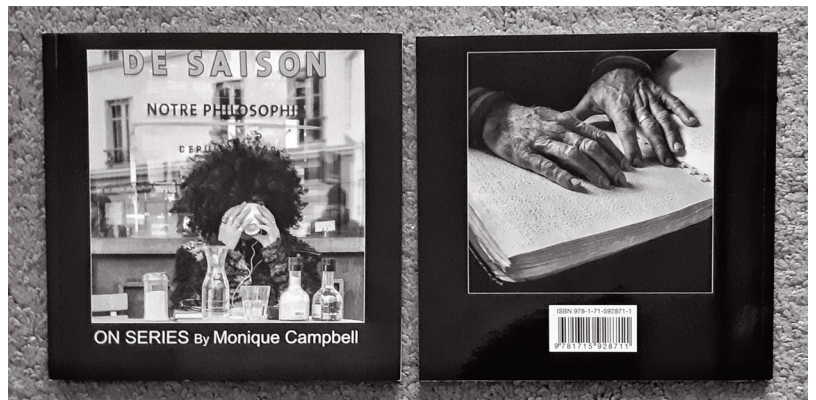
ToPourWithLove explodes with colour, vitality and plenty of verve. This is the artful expression of a creative maker and shaker, Deborah Powell. Enjoy her work and consider a gift certificate for a socially distanced paint pour with a family member. For more information, email her at topourwithlove@gmail.com and visit her website at www.deborah-powell.ca/art-gallery.



Monique Campbell, a member of Latow Photography Guild, "chooses to chase the light that shines through the cracks" with startling results for images that linger in your mind's eye.

She is in the Arts Burlington Online Christmas Show at www.artsburlington.ca/gallery.

Her first coffee table book, ON Series, has just come out and would make an ideal gift. It is \$50 plus shipping and available by emailing her directly at moniquesuniqueimages@gmail.com.



Victoria Ceramic Art is the home-based studio in Mississauga, near Winston Churchill and the 401, of Victoria Kovalova. A member of the Potters Guild at the Art Gallery of Burlington, she exhibits in arts and crafts shows across Ontario and in the United States. She creates ceramic wares and tiles by the mold casting method, decorates them with glazes, and fires them at cone 06. Her designs are inspired by nature and her Ukranian heritage. "I love what I do. It does not feel like a job, it feels like a calling."

Her work may be viewed at Arts Burlington's Online Christmas Show at www.artsburlington.ca/gallery. You may contact her through email at victoriaceramic@gmail.com.



Khaula Mazhar and her many works out in the community

Continued from Previous Page

Laura Beaton, proprietor and artist of Curated Silk Wearable Art says, "I like to feel finished and coordinated going out into the world." So she has created a line of elegant scarves with coordinated face masks inspired by her own unique art. Consider the convenience and thoughtfulness of gift certificates found on her website www.laurabeatonart.com. She has work in the current virtual show, INSPIRED, of Arts On The Credit.



Duplassie Designs represents the work of one Helen Duplassie, active in the arts scene in southern Ontario with Beaux Arts Gallery, Headwaters Arts, and SOVA. Chiefly working in oils, she also creates lovely one-of-a-kind cards, intriguing pieces of jewelry with dye-on-silk pendants, and smaller paintings that all make such special gifts. She can be contacted at (905) 453-4217 or by email at helendu@rogers.com.

Khula Mazhar and her many works out in the community figure large, as with really big murals in Port Credit, or when instructing people of all ages on making their own art. She has a perfect line of artfully designed items for memorable gifts, and all at \$50 and under.

Choose from original watercolour paintings, holiday greeting cards, resin art tableware, and geode-inspired resin pendants. Visit KhulaMazhar.com to learn more.

Monika Schaefer's work in fibre arts and ceramics is beautifully showcased with the Arts Burlington Online Christmas Sale (www.artsburlington.ca/gallery), she was the key organizer of that endeavor, a visit to her studio in Carlisle is a wonderful short excursion just a bit northwest of Milton in that

beautiful escarpment country.

In her own words, "I create both functional and dysfunctional works for home and garden. I love lots of colour (purple is my current favourite), and many of my garden pieces are very colourful." Email her at info@monikaschaefer.com.

Photographer and pastel artist, ecmunson, currently has

work in four area virtual shows: Arts Burlington's Online Christmas Sale, www.artsburlington.ca/latow-ecmunson, Credit Valley Artisans at www.creditvalleyartisans.ca/ConnieMunson.html, the Mar-



tys' Store initiative with <https://martys.store/collections/ecmunson>, and ArtTrendZ.



Her piece, "Tangled Reflections," it is available as a Limited Edition Giclee print, 14x20, matted, or matted and framed. Contact her at ellie73m@yahoo.ca if interested in any of her work.

So before you say, "It's a wrap" for your holiday gift giving, enjoy the comfort of armchair browsing and reach out to some local artists and artisans in these artful corridors of commerce.

Far from the madding crowds, you can put the joyful back into giving and support creative makers!

Brampton nurse: We're tired, but we won't give up

As a Registered Nurse in the Intensive Care Unit (ICU) at Brampton Civic, Ashley Tarasco-Oliver is accustomed to caring for seriously ill patients.

"Unfortunately, in the ICU it's always a worst case scenario—for every single patient in the ICU, it is their worst day," she says. "It motivates me to know that I can help and I will do everything I can to get you over this hurdle."

When COVID-19 hit, the demands on our hospitals were magnified, and as our region rides the second wave of the pandemic, front line

workers like Ashley are once again challenged to meet increased demands caused by the virus—all while undertaking careful measures to keep patients and staff safe and healthy.

"Procedures like an intubation used to be very simple in terms of PPE; you would to go in the room wearing a mask and do the intubation. Now, there's a lot more gear involved to protect ourselves because these procedures are considered high risk," she explains. "Now, to do an intubation we need a negative pressure room or HEPA filter, we all need to

be wearing PPE like gowns and goggles and we all need to be wearing respirators. It's a lot. It definitely makes you more aware of the risks involved in everything we're doing, but at the end of the day, the way I care for my patients has not changed."

While Ashley's commitment to exceptional patient care remains steadfast amidst the challenges of the pandemic, she admits that some days are extremely difficult.

"I've been a nurse for 14 years and every nurse will tell you that there are patients and

experiences that stick with you—every nurse has a few. And in the past nine months I can tell that any nurse, especially within our ICU, has many stories that have changed us or changed our perception of how things happen. It has been extremely, extremely emotional," she says. "One of the hardest moments for me was having a Zoom call with a family while their loved one was dying. I had to very quickly get the call going for them and connect all the family members. I stayed in the room with the patient so she wasn't

alone and the family prayed and spoke to their mother. And then I just ... I let them know when she was gone. In all my years of nursing I would never let anyone pass away alone, so that was something I'll never forget."

Throughout the pandemic, teams across Osler have come together to support each other. Ashley credits her ICU teammates with helping her through the tough days.

"The main thing that I have gotten out of COVID is how proud I am of the team and the way that

we have come together to protect, support, and assist each other. It's very hard for me to go home and explain to my husband what I see at work, because people outside of the ICU will never fully understand the extent of the things that we see and do, but our team is working so well together and we are supporting each other very well," she says "I think that's what is getting us through; to come out and have a debrief with your team about what's happened has been very helpful."

'Tis The Season for Savings - Seasonal Holiday Markets!

by E.C. Munson

Discover those artisan treasures and choose an artful photograph or piece of fine art from these online sites of area arts organizations.

Far from the madding crowds, you can enjoy a safe visit from the comfort of your armchair. Personalized service and arrangements for payment, curbside pickups or delivery. Welcome to the joy of shopping online while supporting local makers.

Welcome to martys.store, the new initiative of Mississauga Arts Council, featuring Holiday Arts Boutiques of their member creatives. From visual arts, photography, music to buy, dance lessons, apparel, accessories, and lots more, there is something creative for everyone on your list this year. Buying and delivery arrangements made with each artist.



Arts On The Credit is featuring their current virtual 3-dimensional show, Inspired at www.artsonthecredit.ca/gallery. "You will be able to contact the artists directly to purchase their work and add to your collection, directly from the gallery." You can follow them on IG @aotc2019 to view featured artists.

Next, Visual Arts Mississauga is preparing to open their 43rd Annual Juried Show of Fine Arts.

This juried show has pieces from emerging and established artists living and working in Ontario and will be up on their website from Jan. 14 – Dec. 31, 2021. For more information, visit www.visualartsmississauga.com/exhibitions/

The 21st Annual Lakeshore Art Trail is virtually accessible with their Holiday Fine Art Market showcasing artists' new work. Peruse their members online shops at your leisure. Please click on the Holiday Fine Art Market poster to be brought to our first-ever Online Art Trail! (www.lakeshoreart-trail.com/lat-holiday-market.html) Sales and deliveries arranged with each artist.



ArtTrendZ continues their Virtual Holiday Bazaar! for the month of December with jewelry, art cards, prints, photographs, and more starting from \$10 for some and all priced at \$100 or under!

Visit each of the seven boutiques at www.facebook.com/ArtTrendz-An-Artist-Collective-1720407324932353.

Headwaters Arts Gallery has the Cape Breton Highlands, Sherry Park's solo show, online for viewing and purchasing. Personalized arrangements for buying, pickup and/or delivery in further detail at this link. Sherry's show is on through January 25, 2021 in The Pond Gallery at Alton Mill Arts Centre, headwatersarts.com/sherry-park-cape-breton-highlands/.

And staying LIVE for the month of December, you can still check out almost 100 artists from six different guilds at Arts Burlington's Online Christmas Sale at bulldog-tiger-ksdw.squarespace.com/gallery.

With members from all over southern Ontario, even from as far north as Ottawa, their online marketing for members is awesome! Those studios are humming with weavers, carvers, potters, hookers, artists, and photographers creating unique gifts.



Visual Arts Brampton, A Non-profit Arts Community Encouraging Creativity, has Gift Certificates to use for their popular Zoom Paint Nights or even Memberships. Check out those courses and introductory paint nights offered on their website, www.visualartsbrampton.com and plan for those long winter nights. Call 905-453-9142 or email info@visualartsbrampton.com.



Shopping the Artful Corridor of Commerce!

Continued from Previous Page

Credit Valley Artisans in Georgetown has opened up their online Christmas Sale featuring 17 artist members from four of their guilds. Palette & Pencil Guild, Potters & Sculptors Guild, Stained Glass Artisans, and Heritage Handweavers & Spinners. www.creditvalleyartisans.ca/



Beaux Arts Gallery opened at their new location with Winter Art Show and Sale, a virtual show running from November 19 – January 31, sponsored by the Downtown Brampton BIA. An amazing show with such a stellar range of work!

Beaux Arts AN ARTIST RUN GALLERY
BRAMPTON
EST. 2002



SHOW DATES: NOVEMBER 19 - JANUARY 31, 2021

sponsored by  **Downtown
Brampton BIA**

Artists come from all over the GTA, the southwest in Burlington, up north in Mono, and from all over Peel Region to enter work in the shows at this gem of a gallery. www.beauxartsbrampton.org/copy-of-exhibitions-1.

With such a hustle and a bustle going on, these many non-profit and charitable arts and cultural organizations invite you to sit back in that comfy chair, check your naughty and nice list, and let your fingers do the clicking!

THE ARTISTS OF
LAKE SHORE ART TRAIL
PRESENT

LAKE SHORE
ART
Market

**Holiday
Fine Art
Market**
ONLINE

Visit each artist in their
virtual art shop via our
first-ever Online Art Trail

NOV. 14 • DEC. 31, 2020
www.lakeshorearttrail.com
f i @LakeshoreArtTrail

Winter support services available for people experiencing homelessness

The Region of Peel and its partners will be providing several programs to keep vulnerable residents safe, warm and sheltered.

Offering 24/7 support for urgent homelessness needs, food, shelter access, referrals and more. The Street Helpline connects to our mobile Street Outreach team who can often come to your location to help. If you're in

crisis or face an urgent need, call 1-877-848-8481.

The Shelter Intake Line (905-450-1996) can help you find the best option in any Peel shelter, including in adult, youth and family shelters.

Out of the Cold Program at St. Leonard's Place Peel (416) 500-7274 is an emergency shelter for men aged 18+ experiencing homelessness. The

program runs until Mar. 2021 between 7 p.m. and 8 a.m.

Services include: overnight shelter operating under full COVID-19 prevention protocols, access to health care, primary health care, referrals and information, winter clothing, such as hats and gloves, laundry facilities, hygiene items, small locker space for belongings and snacks and breakfast.

Regeneration Meal Program and Supports (156 Main St N., Brampton) offers facilities and food for people in need, including showers and laundry, phone and computers, staff support, clothing, breakfast and lunch seven days a week.

The City of Mississauga's Open Window Hub Drop-In and Meal Program (301 Burnhamthorpe

Road West) offers support to at-risk and homeless people, including referrals for mental health or addictions treatment, housing and employment services.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, box lunches, personal hygiene kits and items such as socks, gloves and hats are provided as needed.

A COVID-19 Isolation and Recovery Centre can be

accessed by calling (905) 799-7700 (905-584-2216 in Caledon).

These are recovery facilities that are available for residents infected with COVID-19.

These private units are available for people aged 16+ who do not have a safe place to stay during their recovery. Learn more at peelregion.ca/coronavirus/testing/#self-isolate.

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The A Les Weller & Mark Hughes Production

TOM & RICK

Show!

WATCH ON FACEBOOK!

WHERE MUSIC MEETS COMMUNITY

THIS WEEK'S SHOW

MUSICAL GUEST



THE FREEMANS

MUSICAL GUEST



DAVE RAVE
TEENAGE HEAD

INVENTOR & AUDIO ENGINEER



JOHNNY MATUSIAK

MISSISSAUGA MUSIC DEVELOPMENT



COREY POOLE

COOKING WITH



CARSON

PUNK ROCK POLITICIAN



ANDREW CASH

Port Credit Explore

Shore GRILL AND GROTTO RESTAURANT